Ann T. Shoemaker

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025

https://archive.org/details/parisinprofile0000geor

Paris in Profile

The Luxembourg Gardens

Paris in Profile

By
GEORGE SLOCOMBE

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

Boston and New York
Houghton Mifflin Company
The Riverside Press Cambridge
1929

COPYRIGHT, 1929, BY GEORGE SLOCOMBE

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO REPRODUCE
THIS BOOK OR PARTS THEREOF IN ANY FORM

The Riverside Press
CAMBRIDGE · MASSACHUSETTS
PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

CONTENTS

I. Introductory 1

II. Old Paris 5
- The Voice of the City 5
- The Spring Comes up to Paris 8
- The Island 12
- The Little Trades 16
- The Holy Chapel 20
- The City of Tombs 24
- Old King Carnival 27
- A Queen's Chariot 31
- The Six Days 34
- Paris of the Romans 37

III. Bridges, Streets, and Gates 41
- The Bridges of the Seine 41
- The Gates of the City 45
- Port of Paris 49
- Streets Under Glass 54

IV. Cafés and Cabarets 58
- The Cafés of Paris 58
- At the Sign of the Black Cat 61
- The Grande Semaine 67
- The Men from Maxim's 71
- The Bright Pageant 75
- Cafés out of Mind 79
- The Decadence of Paris 83

V. Montmartre 87
The Lapin Agile 87
Montmartre of the Poets 91
Montmartre of the Painters 95

VI. Paris of the Revolution 99
The Feast of the Bastille 99
The Month of Madness 104
Under the Terror 108

VII. Parisian Painters and Writers 113
The Legend of Utrillo 113
The Women of the Parisian Painters 117
Manet, Mallarmé, and Moore 121
Jean Richepin 125
Anatole France — His Friends and Biographers 128
A Female Boswell 132
The Paris of Balzac 136
A Paris Salon 139
The Graves of the Poets 143

VIII. Paris of the Gourmands 148
The Great Restaurants of Paris 148
On Country Cooking 152
The Wines of Paris 156
On Dining Out in Paris 159
Paris by Night 163
On the Art of Eating 167
The Song of Wine 171

IX. Parisians Past and Present 175
The End of the Idler 175
La Goulue 179

Contents

The Apache 183
The Last of the Boulevardiers 186
Parisians of the Eighteenth Century 191
The Last Romantic 194
Cults and Coteries 198
The City of Missing Men 202
The Death of Falstaff 205

X. Roads out of Paris 210
Roads and Inns 210
The Restoration of the Inn 214
The Road to Avignon 218
The Road of the Romans 222
The Road of the Vert Galant 226
The Road of the Lionheart 231
The Road to Lourdes 235
The Great Inns of France 238

XI. Paris in Profile 242
Fairs and Circuses 242
The Third Musketeer 246
Christmas in Paris 249
Crimes and Mysteries 253
Black Venus and White 257
The Jewel at a City's Heart 261
The Play in Paris 264
A French Wedding 268
The Neglect of Rabelais 272
The Kingdom of the Beggars 275
The Woman from Malabar 279
The Art of Cabaret 282
The Ship of Fools 287

ILLUSTRATIONS

The Luxembourg Gardens	*Frontispiece*
A Street Fair in Montmartre	4
Place Dauphine	10
Hôtel de Sens and Rue du Figuier	12
Sainte Chapelle	20
The Six-Days Bicycle Race	34
The Pont Neuf and the Old City	44
Modern Paris Architecture. The Rue Mallet-Stevens	50
A Boulevard Café	58
The Cabaret of the Lapin Agile	90
The Tomb of Heine in Montmartre Cemetery	144
Notre Dame de Paris	160
Les Halles	168
The Old Iron Fair	242
A Paris Circus	246
Île Saint-Louis and Hôtel Lauzun	262

Paris in Profile

I

INTRODUCTORY

WITHIN my own brief time I have seen Paris change from a French city to a German city. I have seen banks in concrete and steel replace the old cafés, with their golden-brown fronts and gilt and plate glass and plush and old waiters like archdeacons and elegant retired army officers frowning over news. I have watched, with an emotion compounded of curiosity and excitement and regret, the leisurely current of life in Paris quicken its pulse and pace, the invasion of the scholarly decaying quarters of the old city by a new, impetuous generation eager to sweep away and to break down. The war and the automobile, jazz and cocktails, radio and the motion pictures have quickened and stimulated and vulgarized existence as Henri Bergson once brilliantly quickened and vulgarized philosophy by substituting the process of intuition for the process of reasoning.

Within a few years the colour of Paris has changed. The once even roof-line of the boulevards, as regular as the princely profile of the Place des Vosges, that square which is the proudest Parisian relic of the Renaissance, has become jagged like an old saw. Hotels with marble fronts, their uppermost storeys

terraced like American skyscrapers, stand like fortresses from a modern German fairy tale along the boulevard which the wit of Aurélien Scholl and his companions once animated until Paradise itself seemed, to an admiring contemporary, but the apéritif hour in such company infinitely prolonged. The rue Royale alone, of all the ancient promenade from the Place de la Concorde to the Boulevard Montmartre, retains its character and aspect, but feebly changed. The Restaurant Larue has not exchanged its plush and velvet and gilt-edged mirrors for the hard brilliance and comfortlessness of modern art. And the painted walls of Maxim's, with their bright colours dimmed to a soft autumnal tint like the memories of the nineties in retrospect, still flaunt the elegancies of the period of which Maxim's itself was the triumphant apogee.

But the old mansions of the Champs-Élysées, from whose windows the great financiers of the Second Empire saw the glittering pageant of their contemporaries move quickly before them in the proudest avenue in Europe, the high world and the half-world, grandes dames and courtisanes, wits and dandies — the old mansions are being demolished. The noble avenue is filled from the Arc de Triomphe to the Rond Point with plate glass and glittering cars. The old suburbs of Passy and Auteuil, which first received the aristocratic refugees from the downfall of the Faubourg Saint-Germain, as they were the first to receive the émigrés from Russia and Hungary, have

lost their former delicate provincial air of an archi-episcopal city, brooding over gentility among its trees and tombs. The streets are cut up into canyons of white concrete. And the rue Mallet Stevens, a triumph of modern architecture, all planes and cubes, bewildering and vaguely beautiful, is even an object of pilgrimage to young men from central and northern Europe enraged by the maddening curvilinear complexity of Nature. Even the Butte Montmartre, the last refuge of the decayed, decrepit romanticism of last century, a pathetic village of shambling studios and rural cottages, lurid still with the memories of the Lapin Agile and the vagaries of Utrillo, has succumbed to the prevailing vogue. The vague roads which wandered up the hill between irregular pink-washed cottages and stunted trees are now hammered out into a harsh, if dazzling, urbanity, and lined with modern and remarkable studios equipped with roof gardens and garages.

These, however, are but the advance guards of the army which threatens the Paris of the nineteenth century. Graver perils are ahead. Before ten years are over, the traffic congestion, which increases daily by a remorseless arithmetical progression, will have forced Paris underground. Four subterranean streets are already planned by the Municipal Council. In ten years there may be forty. By that time, it is estimated by the indomitable persons who peer into the future, undaunted by the fate of all prophets, most of present-day Paris will be scrapped. Except

for the Paris of historic value, the little quadrilateral astride the two islands of the Seine, the Louvre, the Place de la Concorde, and the Arc de Triomphe, with its impressive, everlasting rite in memory of the nameless dead that sleeps beneath it, the Paris of to-day, the Paris of Baron Haussmann, the boulevards, with their pathetic dying trees, their gay newspaper kiosks and leisurely crowds, will have disappeared.

Vast pyramids of stone and concrete, pyramids with countless windows like the cave sepulchres of a phantom race, and connected by streets under the ground, will harbour the Parisians of that new age. From their sky fortresses the descendants of the old boulevardiers will look down upon the queer decaying remnant of old Paris, the blackened houses with their high Mansard roofs, the trees bowed over the river, the bridges useless now to convey the burden of a traffic grown monstrously too great. They will see the dark rectangle of the Louvre, and the twin towers, incredibly small, of Notre Dame. And on some summer evening perhaps the wind will bring to them in their high towers the scent of chestnut blossoms, and they will sigh in vain, overcome with the soft nostalgia of the son in exile, for the Paris destroyed forever.

A Street Fair in Montmartre

II

OLD PARIS

The Voice of the City

By what magic of marching words can one reconstruct the bright mosaic, the fine muscular frieze, the moving landscape of sky and trees and river that is Paris? Can mere music re-create that immortal picture, the military music of the orderly columns that march away forever and ever across the white page? Dégas and Manet did it with a flourish of the brush and a tube of paint, a flourish into which they put their young ardour, some of the communicative folly of Paris, and the memory of the rose mist under the trees on the boulevards on a summer night. Willette and Steinlen, in their vast majestic murals in the Taverne de Paris off the Place de Clichy, the most accurate and beautiful record of the Paris of the beginning of this century, had the same vision. The Bois de Boulogne was a circus procession of colour and light. They saw, and through their eyes we see, the high-stepping horses, the languid courtisanes smiling among their cushions, the sunlight sparkling from the lake and dappling with yellow the green forest, the gallant figures of the men, the mild, limpid sky, not yet brazen with the gaseous heat of a later day.

On the Boulevard de Clichy, a fair, the Fair of Montmartre, was in gay progress. It was such a fair

as Bunyan saw, the Bedford tinker brooding in his prison over the country joys forsworn. Gambling for the yokels, furbelows for the maids. A great confusion of noise and light. Worldly Wiseman with his cynical booth of cheap sensations. Merry-go-rounds and swings. The harsh, shrill music which in Nijni-Novgorod or in Nancy, in Manchester or in Michigan, is the voice of the fair. The same that was, to the allegorist in his dark prison, the mocking voice of this world and its pleasures. In all these great panels, fainter-toned and tempered now with the wistfulness of that dead generation, the more leisurely life of the Ville Lumière of last century, Paris is painted with the same passionate admiration that the Greeks gave to Helen.

The very crowds on the streets have the rapt air of pilgrims. Caught in that warm evening light, the same light which pours now at sunset along the boulevards as the sun goes down behind the dark temple-roof of the Madeleine, the Parisians of these dead muralists, both masters of the cartoon, seem like figures dancing on air, so flushed are they with the heady excitement of the summer night, the atmosphere charged with emotion and expectancy. On such a night nearly twenty years later another Paris learned of the declaration of war. You can almost sense, in the gay, nervous tension of the city portrayed on the walls of the Taverne de Paris, the calamity, gravely borne, which burst later. You can feel something of the intensity of devotion felt by a

million men dying in darkness and the despair of deliverance, for that warm, pulsing city, Lutetia of the Romans and Paname of the poilu.

A book about a foreign city is like an old map of a strange country. It is, or should be, full of a generous reticence. Garrulous in parts, noting in a careful hand the forests haunted by dangerous beasts, the swamps and high peaks, the rivers, mountains, and valleys, it should say also of some places: Unknown, Uncharted, Undiscovered. The log of such a navigator, then, leaves its readers in a pleasant state of suspended animation. The adventure is halted by a dark forest, in which strange creatures await discovery. One can enter, brave its perils, and take the reward. Or one can turn away, promising some day to return.

There are many attractive places in Paris like that forest. They flash upon the eye during a bus journey, a taxicab's short cut through a maze of mediæval alleys in an unfamiliar quarter. A carved stone doorway, a mullioned window, a dormer, a courtyard with a fig tree in bloom, flooded with green light at the end of a dark, stone passage — they are glimpsed and lost, never to be recaptured, the fleeting treasure of the eyes.

The only way to see a city, if you are a tourist set down in its centre, is to go outside its walls and walk in again, looking about you with the shrewd eye with which an early traveller sought the night's inn. To

walk into the city from each of its gates in turn, looking to the right for a church or a monastery, or the remains of either, and to the left for the taverns built for pilgrims, like the curious hotels about the shrine at Lourdes.

Thus you will see a city, and Paris more than any other. Enter by the gate of Saint-Cloud or the gate of Sèvres, as the Versaillois of Thiers did to destroy the Commune in fire and blood. Or by the gate of Italy, where the men of Marseilles marched in singing a song which has since gone round the world, the battle song of the first French Republic. Or, better than all others, by the water-gate, the great gate of the Seine, historic daughter to that Father Tiber of the Romans which made Macaulay tremble, and others, too, who read his magnificent lines. This way, sweeping through the city under bridges like battle cries, many of them with the names of battles, you will see and feel more of Paris than head can hold or heart bear, if you have an eye for beauty and an ear for the sounds of beauty, myriad and mysterious as the secret voices of the city.

The Spring Comes up to Paris

The spring comes up from the south in a sweet fury, racing the storms and heats of summer. In a day the turbulent Seine is tranquil. The waters flow gray and limpid under the gray bridges. The trees that glow at the water's edge are suddenly clothed in green, mantling the busy quays. On the Champs-Élysées the chestnut blossoms raise their proud eccle-

siastical heads like candles flaming in a green church for a pagan mass, the mass of the adoration of the seasons. The bouquinistes on the quays drowse over their knitting or their newspapers in the sunlight, while their coloured prints and old leather bindings slowly fade. On his great statue on the Pont Neuf, Henri Quatre, the Vert Galant, looks proudly over the city that he had found worthy of a mass; and over the bridge below him many young men in love walk heedlessly with enchanted eyes, wondering for the first time at the wide sky and the magical Parisian air.

On such a day old Paris is like a wine that rises to the head. It is discovered again, like youth. Its ageing stone, greenish in winter, melancholy in the dark season, gleams whitely under the touch of the sun. The eager spring light searches out beauty in forgotten corners. A curving brown-tiled roof, a high carved cornice, a sculptured head over a window or a door, a wrought-iron balcony, spring suddenly into relief. The eye remarks them where it remarked none before, and a quiet street is like an unsuspected garden.

The plane trees in the Place Dauphine, that green heart of the Île de la Cité, have spread their large, handsome leaves until the windows of the law publishers, full of dry and dusty copies of the Penal Code, reflect the dancing shadows of the little pools of light that here and there moisten the flagged square. A couple of little restaurants have put out humble

tables on the sidewalk and over them an awning, and the low Louis Treize entresol windows, wide and semi-circular and open to the mild air and cheerful conversation of the tiny place, are filled with potted plants, birds in cages, and women knitting.

For two centuries the Place Dauphine has hardly changed in aspect or in character. It was the Place de Thionville in revolutionary days; and for Anatole France, who loved it as he loved all old and venerable things, it was the Place de la Révolution itself. Madame Roland lived in the quiet house numbered 28, and there entertained her denounced Girondins until she, too, was denounced and followed them to the guillotine. And on one side of the Place the famous little theatre of Tabarin once stood. The broad façade and wide stone steps of the Palais de Justice fill one side of the square. Facing it, and seen through the square's narrow opening on the Pont Neuf, that bridge which was new under Henri Quatre but is now the oldest of the bridges in Paris, is the Great King himself, the Bold Lover.

The Place Dauphine is one of the little green places in that gray triangle formed by old Paris, a triangle with its head at the Place de la République, and its two feet astride the river and resting on the left bank. The Place des Vosges, larger, more spectacular, more frequented, is another. There the prevailing gray of the old city is warmed and lightened by the red brick which makes this square, once a horse market and left in its present form by Henri Quatre, strangely modern. And this air of modernity is strengthened

Place Dauphine

by the discovery that among the beautiful square's fortunate inhabitants are the members of the New York School of Fine Art.

The Place des Vosges is deep in the Marais, that old marshy quarter of the city which became, once drained, the quarter of its finest mansions. Its streets are full of another life now, busy with a loud commerce and ignorant of the beauty that died when the human hand was replaced by the machine. But every street name is a memory of that age and perpetuates the name of some guild of craftsmen, ironworkers or goldbeaters, or some order of monks, or — like the street of the Falconer — recalls some courtly field sport. And almost every street has its astonishing old houses, put now to evil and disfiguring uses, ignobly soiled by commerce, but still retaining under grime and disfigurement, under the mean signs of a million small trades, the notable conception of the builders. An arched gateway, a carved oak door, a frieze high up under the eaves, a round tower, something gallant in line and curve, something proud and stable in the thick walls and in the arch of gate and stairway, each shows in some way the inextinguishable bearing of those men who could not brook overrule of king or prince and who, like the dukes of Rohan, could tell the admiring world:

"Roy ne puis,
Prince ne daigne,
Rohan je suis."

This last with a great shout!

To house such a line was built the Hôtel de Beauvais, in the rue François Miron, still intact with its circular courtyard and Flemish sculptures and flowering ironwork balustrade; and the Hôtel de Juigné, in the rue Thorigny; and the Hôtel de Sully, in the rue Saint-Antoine, a street full of old houses. And noblest perhaps of them all, but sadly neglected by the city of Paris, which conducts an unemployment bureau in one corner of it, the Hôtel de Sens in the rue du Figuier, older even than the famous Hôtel de Cluny, now a museum, and like it one of the few remaining specimens of Paris domestic architecture in the late fifteenth century. The old market of the Temple has gone, although a fragment of it may still be distinguished between the rue des Archives and the rue de Picardie. And where stood once the strong tower of the Temple, in which Louis Seize and his family were imprisoned until their execution, is now a little garden, with a statue in it of the poet Béranger, sweet singer of a vanished day.

The Island

On an old map of Paris the Island of Saint Louis appears like New England on an early map of North America. There is little or nothing else. To the north or to the south, ringed faintly with trees and windmills and wood smoke from cottage fires, rise the green heights of Montmartre and Montrouge, the red hill and the hill of martyrs. Across a stone bridge on the neighbouring island looms largely the marvellous vast Gothic pile of Notre Dame, still in its astonish-

Hôtel de Sens and Rue du Figuier

ing infancy, the white blossom of a new art bursting into flower over the face of Europe. And round both islands, buttressed and fortified and swinging at anchor like moored ships amidstream, swirls the ribbed current of the Seine, twisting across the city like a great serpent and holding all of future Paris in its knotty coils.

The Île Saint-Louis is like an old cameo worn on the breast of a new gown. It has remained in the heart of Paris as it has remained in the heart of every young man who first came upon it suddenly and without warning, a green isle set among trees and overhung with ancient stone houses, and comforting with little brown-faced estaminets like the Restaurant des Mariniers. The names of its leafy quays — Orléans and Anjou and Bourbon — are the names of the three great houses of France. Here the last vestiges of the monarchy are written in small republican letters on the high wall at the street corner. The forty kings who, to quote the royalist Léon Daudet, created France, are but names shouted upon the wind. Their dust is whirled with the dead leaves over the cobbled quays, and only a duke in exile, hunting the rare Belgian stag behind his trim Louis Napoleon imperial, lives to perpetuate their name.

On the Quai d'Anjou I came early one morning, a little dazed by the sudden strong sun after the brief midsummer night, upon a rag-picker bent over an ash can at the door of a house that has seen the kings ride in barges down the river and the revolutionary

pikes swarm like a forest on the river bank, the Bastille go up in thunder and go down in black ruin and smoke. He was an old man with a face like one of Michael Angelo's models, and while we waited for a café to open its hospitable door he imparted the simple philosophy of his ageing days. Another door was fast closing upon him, but through the narrowing crack he could still see the world strongly outlined in the bright sun. Its colours were never brighter to him than now, when shortly he would see them no more. He would greet the closing of the door without complaining, but still with sharp regret, he that had known nothing all his life but hunger and cold and the emptiness of days. And as we left him he still leaned, whistling softly under his breath, over the shreds and remnants that, carefully garnered, would yield him at the end of his toil a few sous for bread and fewer still for wine.

I came back to this same door not long ago. There were lights under the trees and airs of music. Cars shining in silver and ebony rolled up out of the gloom, and under the appraising eye of the island population deposited in the lighted space under the sculptured gateway their cargo of silks and perfume and white jeweled flesh. The old Hôtel Lauzun, one of the few intact treasures bequeathed by antiquity, was transformed for a party. A dramatic sketch was in progress, performed by the Parisian grandes dames, or rather grandes demoiselles, in the interests of charity. There was a ball to follow.

No house more celebrated than this has survived the fire and the fury of the Révolution. It is a paradise of the bibliophile, the collector, the men who would live among ghosts and people their houses with the dead. A king's sister came there in a satin-lined gondola to keep her rendezvous d'amour. That literary polisher of stones and jewels, Théophile Gautier, lived there dreaming of his ladies in Chinese porcelain, his fantastic cameos and enamels. The melancholy poet Baudelaire himself frequented the place, and chopped firewood in Gautier's salon, while in the next room his crazy club of hashish-eaters swooned rapturously away on divans into their literary reconstruction of a drug addict's artificial paradise.

A stage had been erected in the famous galleried courtyard, temporarily sheltered from the heat without by awnings, but protected by nothing from the heat within. A thousand people nursed alternating feelings of curiosity, apprehension, admiration, disillusionment, and professional cynicism before the unraised curtain. The great actress of the Comédie Française, Cécile Sorel, sat enthroned in a cloud of worshippers and sceptics. Boni de Castellane waited impassively for the play to open, like a man who has done everything and been everything and is now merely a marquis. The improvised theatre swam in a rainbow-filled maze of amber perfume and musk and jessamine and polite chatter and gold light from the handsome lustres. And then with a creak and a

groan the curtain went up on a background incongruously composed of priceless green Gobelin tapestry against red plush redder than an alcove in a Russian cabaret, and a foreground full of young ladies who probably had been taught to keep their tongues still, and did, but hadn't been taught to keep their feet still, and didn't. There were a number of period dances in period costumes, and they were justifiably applauded by a house too old to learn the Charleston and too tired. But the dancers were professional. The young ladies hadn't a dance in them nor a step. And at the sight of them a producer from Broadway wrung his eloquent, despairing hands.

The Little Trades

The long cry of the old-clothes dealer in the narrow Montmartre street is a surer sign of spring than the prudent swallow — that long waiting cry that is like a lament from the past, startling like an echo, haunting like a dream but half remembered. For with the first days of this season, which is like no other time in Paris, this eager moment when the old brown and gray houses put on their youth, and many a porte cochère reveals the miracle of an almond tree flowering in a dark courtyard, the little trades of Paris come out into the streets.

When the spring sunlight has sufficiently warmed a patch of wall, the porcelain-mender, leading his blind pony, arrives and spreads his wares. Unwinding a roll of old cloth, he disposes the fascinating fragments of his trade — little bits of coloured porcelain,

blue like lapis lazuli, green like jade, red like ox-blood; scraps of wire and little bowls of cement. And then, outspreading his corduroy-clothed legs and nestling his back comfortably against the sun-warmed wall, surrounded by those broken things which are a better symbol than any other of our mortality, this shabby divinity mends them with an almost godlike patience. He, too, has the cry of his trade — a thin note on a small trumpet, reedy like the call of Pan.

Under the window where I write, within a gunshot of the Opera, rises twice a week the dolorous cry of the chair-mender leading his half-blind pony through the narrow streets. The old-clothes dealers also have a variety of cries, varying originally, I imagine, with their nationality. At least one of them has been caught by Charpentier and immortalized in 'Louise,' the great opera of the street life of Paris. But in Montmartre I have heard more beautiful couplets than those in 'Louise,' more hauntingly suggestive. The beauty of the cries is so incongruous in relation to the dinginess of their purpose that I suspect their origin to be lost. Ancient Hebrew melodies they are, perhaps, recollected in an ancestor's distant childhood — an air from the ancient desert, in the night of captivity.

The chair-mender, the worker in osier and cane, the knife-grinder, the bird-seed seller, have the separate cries of their calling, sung or whistled, gay or sad. They alone are left of the score of itinerant trades of the eighteenth century so curiously pictured in those colour prints for which a whole century of

manners and elegances seemed specially to have been created. There are no more marchandes de nouveautés, with their delicious and sympathetic leer, their great paniers full of perfumes and unguents and soaps, laces and furbelows and frills, all the apparatus of feminine coquetry. The rue de la Paix has changed all that, although in the remoter countryside men and women still peddle such trifles to the peasantry, walking from farm to farm with their basket, or even — such is progress — touring the provinces with a shining new Ford.

The little trades have their own professional codes. Each quarter is jealously defined. No oppressed European minorities are more exactly scheduled and demarcated than the zones of influence in which the little traders practise, without fear of competition, their ancient and respectable commerce. In that old quarter of the Temple in which since the Middle Ages the peddlers and the mendicants, the costermongers and the old-clothes dealers have congregated, their social standing and professional status are written down in the tablets of tradition. In many cases the trade has been followed by the same family since time immemorial. The Jews alone have a longer ancestry. The history of the little trades, indeed, runs parallel to that of the Jews in Western Europe. Often protected by royal favour against the jealousy of the rich merchants, the little trades remained within the confines of the old ghetto, herded with older and more honourable guilds, the

workers in gold and silver, traffickers in curious merchandise from the East, dealers in gems and pearls.

The diamond dealers to-day remain a class apart. They are of all nationalities, and of none. Dark, furtive men with fur-collared overcoats, they sit all day in their crowded cafés on the rue Cadet, weighing and scrutinizing little flashing stones on the marble-topped tables. The Club des Diamantaires, as the most frequented of these cafés is known to those who do not frequent it, is rather more exclusive than a bankers' club in New York. Now and again a breath of scandal, such as the murder of the diamond runner Gaston Truphème, tarnishes the otherwise clear mirror of the club's honour, for there is honour among diamond dealers as among thieves. But on the whole, the cafés of the rue Cadet are as respectable as Hatton Garden, although not as silent.

The little trades are not alone in their preferences for certain taverns. The corporation of the street singers, male and female, has its professional cafés in the rue Saint-Denis, where it meets in the intervals of selling song sheets in the crowded streets of the commercial quarters. The cattle dealers and the market salesmen have, of course, their respective taverns at La Villette and at the Halles, and the very tavern signs in these curious places recall the robust humour of earlier times. The modern trades, as is proper, have appropriated a whole series of large, new, and shining restaurants with sporting titles and

more than sporting prices. The automobile market, for example, which has almost monopolized the quarter of the Porte Maillot, has laid its hand on all the cafés and brasseries in the Avenue de la Grande Armée, and there you may find the type of modern Frenchman, slim, clean-shaven, well-dressed, sleek-headed, speaking the language of the race course and the stock market, of the six-cylinder car and the ærodrome, but not by any stretch of the imagination speaking the language of Voltaire or Racine or even of slang-loving Aristide Briand. Only by one mannerism can you identify him as French — that eloquent, inimitable trick, so fascinating to the stranger, of talking with the hands.

The little trades have that, too. They know all the tricks of language, all the sign manual of humble lives lived hardly. That is why the porcelain-mender, intent upon his delicate job, is taciturn. Only his lips move, murmuring inaudible words in the language of poverty. But if he is poor, there are compensations. Here, on this spring day, the sun warms him. His back is against a stone wall, kindly under the sun. He sits upon the very earth, his legs wide-stretched, mending little coloured things of clay that other hands have broken.

The Holy Chapel

Like a fallen arrow from the skies, the thin stone spire of the Sainte-Chapelle, more delicate than crystal and more ethereal than glass, rises above the dark towers of the Conciergerie. Its narrow black shadow

Sainte Chapelle

falls, at all seasons, upon citizens and tourists, the just and the unjust. Strange accents are heard under the gargoyles. The Swiss guide patters his guide-book English. The little school teachers thrill under the touch of history. The bored flappers yawn. The leading inhabitant of Zenith City strives heroically to take an intelligent interest in the twelfth century, exactly eight hundred years before the invention of the automobile. A young Spaniard with his younger wife kisses her hand in a dark corner of the winding stone stairway, which is what the architect probably intended it for. The stairway winds round and round, up and up, like one of the Tartar kings' secret turrets in the Kremlin, and then with a gasp you are out in the air again, in the most marvellous coloured and moving air ever held between four walls, an air full of dancing light.

For if, as Anatole France declared, Christian art is invariably sad, this chapel is the gayest work of paganism in the world. Its immense, high, and narrow stained-glass windows are as if bewitched with beauty. No such colours, you feel, exist in the natural world. All creation outside is pale and discoloured, robbed of its riches. Some immortal hand has spread this palette, draining the living earth of its life-blood and pouring it into the glass, so that it glows and sparkles with a sanguine intensity. And when, on the heels of a porpoise-like school of tourists, you leave the strange, moving, multi-coloured air of this enchanted place and step out into the sunlight of a stone balcony, it is as if the created world

were but a dim, cold place, drab and lifeless, so much of beauty has been captured in the Sainte-Chapelle, the holy chapel of Gothic art.

There are some happy individuals who have nothing to do all day but look at the silver spire of the Sainte-Chapelle — this and keep a patient eye upon the heaped-up books that line the quays. Within a hundred yards of the chapel I found one day a thin, beautifully printed edition of the poems of Oliver Goldsmith, poor, gentle Noll, 'whose deportment,' recounts the garrulous Boswell, 'was that of a scholar, awkwardly affecting the complete gentleman,' but who was one, for all that. And with this an early edition of George Moore's 'Esther Waters.' George Moore himself returns to Paris from time to time, looking a little ruefully at cafés that have changed and banks that rise sacrilegiously upon the site where famous cafés once stood, and old men unseen since their youth. It is difficult to realize how much Paris has changed in the lifetime of a middle-aged man. I know Parisians in whose lives wars have come and gone, calamity has followed calamity, but to whom nothing marks the passing of the years so much as the changing of a street or the rebuilding of a house. I was at dinner the other night with a splendid old man with yellow-white hair and beard the colour of wax, who had known Barbey d'Aurevilly. That name, thrown gravely into the conversation, was like a chord of music. It awoke the echoes of another and greater generation. Outside, the sky darkened over

the roof-line of a changed Paris. The trees moved uneasily in the Champs-Élysées as if in remembrance of their youth. The Eiffel Tower, rising to mock the sunset, seemed an anachronism. The age of steel had not yet dawned, and the age of gold still reigned. The old man, it appeared, had even known Lamartine. But he was a child then, and indifferent to celebrities, for he was known to exclaim, in the company of the great poet, that he was bored. How many wags would not have given a fortune to have said that in the presence of Tennyson, with his withered crown of bay?

Nearer to our own time, what has become of the generation that reigned in Paris in the ten years before the war? The young men — the Guillaume Apollinaires, the André Salmons, the Francis Carcos — are dead or celebrated, are dead or have grown up. But what of the others? Where are they who filled the salons of Isadora Duncan, then in her splendour? In the last few months before her violent end in Nice, Isadora Duncan seemed to have accomplished that rare thing in the life of an artist, a renaissance. Her genius had flowered again. The shaggy philosopher, Charles Rappoport, paid Isadora, after her dances at the Théâtre Mogador, the tribute of declaiming to her the finest piece of French prose ever written — Renan's Prayer on the Acropolis. On his knees before the dancer, the most caricatured man in France recited to her that immortal supplication, born out of the piety of a pagan, the prayer to an

unknown god. That one perfect prose apostrophe atones for all the deficiencies of French lyric poetry.

The City of Tombs

Out of a narrow street came marching the two mutes, directing the ceremonies with a fine professional air, and then the black-draped horses and high, flower-crowned hearse, followed by the slow-moving, sombre procession of mourners on foot. In front of them, in front of the young widow, marched a tall, handsome, broad-shouldered old man with ruddy cheeks and a square white beard, weeping noisily into a large white handkerchief. The cortège vanished slowly over the crest of the Montmartre street, a dwindling black note on a brilliant summer perspective, and in my mind I followed it on its last journey across Paris to Père Lachaise. Through the Place des Abbesses, full of fat market women and the cries of butchers; along the interminable boulevards extérieurs, across the Place de la République, along more and more curious and sympathetic boulevards, to that walled city of the dead where Héloïse and Abélard sleep forever.

Few tourists venture among the sepulchred alleys of that stone city. The tomb of Oscar Wilde, with its once violently attacked low relief by Epstein, slumbers in tranquillity, and only bees murmur in summer uncritically over the half-forgotten clay. The immortal lovers, heroes of almost the only legend of remote or recent antiquity upon which the

sceptics have not poured the destroying acid of historic fact, are united under their sculptured memorial in an embrace neither Church nor State can ever undo. Beyond the walls of the old cemetery the buses roar and the traffic of the twentieth century rattles by, but here five hundred years are as if they were not, in the presence of the passionate, repentant scholar, and the sweet apostate nun.

I have yet to find the guide-book that is a real guide to these Paris cemeteries. There should be, surely, a directory of the dead as well as of the living. The dead are so much more satisfactory to know and to visit, in their last welcoming home. They at least have not changed their address! And in Paris they hold and hoard the real clue to the mysterious movemented life of this secretive city, so brilliant, polished, and artificial without, and within so hard and vital, so stubborn and passionate. The guide-book to the cemeteries, the vast unpublished Bottin of the burial-grounds, is the real history of the people. Names that in schoolbooks mean nothing and less than nothing, unfamiliar and without music or reason, here on these stone tablets, lichen-grown and sunken with age, come suddenly to life and meaning. Not the vast tomes of Michelet, not even the crooked prose of Carlyle, could make the French Revolution run before our eyes like a moving strip of film, with all that preceded it and all that followed, as do these silent tombs, these remembered names. And so I beg the compilers of handbooks about Paris, whose name is

legion, to include a guide to the Paris cemeteries in their next edition.

But if we are forced to wander uncharted in this mysterious sea of discovery, we are not without precious landmarks to steer by. The English poet Blake, dead only a hundred years ago, is lost in Bunhill Fields, and his biographers can only guess at his nameless, unmarked grave. But the sweet singer Heinrich Heine lies well marked and well loved in Montmartre graveyard, buried amid the pleasurable sights and sounds and individual Parisian odours of the town that was to him, more than any other, the city of his spirit's birth. Emerging curiously on either side of a viaduct leading to the Butte of Montmartre, this curious burial-ground straggles up the hillside like an Oriental city of mosques and minarets, turrets and domes. Here, not far from Heine's tomb, on which a sentimental heimat-nostalgic German student tried to commit suicide not long ago, Lucien Guitry lies buried: after Coquelin, the last of the great race of French actors.

The cemetery of Montparnasse, too, has its legion of poets — Verlaine and Gautier, de Banville and Baudelaire. The graves are a little self-conscious. They rub elbows with celebrities and are religiously tended and garnished. Every year their immortal ashes are the unhearing, indifferent subject of orations by literary deputations, Academicians and actresses of the Comédie Française, all unaware of

the other and greater comédie humaine. A bust of Flaubert, Viking-like and torrential, indicates his tomb. I should have liked to see him buried on the hillside over Rouen, above the narrow, tormented streets of the Norman city through which Mme. Bovary drove with her lover, behind the musty curtains of an aged fiacre. And in his stead, perhaps, the dust of Edgar Allan Poe, the spiritual first of the Montparnassians, now reposing in a too-conventional churchyard in Baltimore.

Two memorial tablets deserve inclusion in this idle, uncalculated catalogue of suggestive Parisian tombs. One is placed on the door of a house in a little street between the rue Saint-Honoré and the Madeleine — the house (rarely seen, and still more rarely visited, by Americans) where Lafayette died. And the other marks the birthplace, on the youthful, irreverent Left Bank, of a young soldier fallen in the wars. He was born there in 1888, records the tablet. He was a poet. And in 1916 he fell on the field of honour, laying down his life 'in defence of his country, the house in which he was born and the Place Saint-Sulpice.' An anticlimax not without its own touching bravado!

Old King Carnival

It is Mardi Gras. To-morrow will be Ash Wednesday. Let us mourn then over the ashes of Carnival. The pleasure in tinsel is one of the few surviving relics of the Middle Ages. There was a time when every man dared to dress bravely in a coat broid-

ered with gold and a hat adorned with feathers. A part, and a large part, of the heroic age was its heroic attire. A man in whose hand a silver-hilted sword was placed had to draw it or wear the gray hose and doublet of the dull citizen, who had no Rotary Club to cheer his feeble spirits and deceive him into thinking he was a dashing fellow. The Round Tables and the other great gastronomic associations in early history were reserved for trenchermen who cut up their meat as they cut up their enemies, with a sword. But we have beaten our swords into typewriters, and the best we can do in the mediæval spirit is the Carnival of Mardi Gras, and even then something curious stirs in us, some old and childish pain, as at the end of a summer evening of play, when we see the queens ride by on their glittering chariots, and the great grinning masks of paint and cardboard bring comedy between the tall, bare trees of the boulevards, and the girls from the famous maisons de couture and the boys from the medical schools tear by in their long serpentine, linked-hands procession, aping the mirth of a day five centuries ago.

The procession has just gone by, and even dry souls who long ago lost the taste for play-acting have had reluctantly to admit that it was not as the procession of other years. There was a time when all of Paris gave itself over to the frenzy and frolic of Mardi Gras. Business was ignored. The Bourse was almost deserted. Even the Chamber of Deputies was abandoned by all save the chief performers. Hack drivers

with gay ribbons in their hard-boiled leather hats and madness in their hard-boiled leather faces drove furiously up and down the boulevards with a cargo of young men and young women. The broad sidewalks of the boulevards were crowded with a scarcely moving mass of people, all seized with the curious, communicative folly of the feast. Strangers danced with strangers and embraced in the streets. Old men tore off their top hats and stamped on them. Young girls pelted everybody with flowers, paper ribbons, small change, chalk pellets, badinage, and sometimes abuse. Elderly female concierges, abandoning their leisurely and professional perusal of the crime reports in the 'Petit Parisien,' made their dazzling annual appearance in the open air and preened themselves under hats of imposing bulk and cost. And after a long and happy expectancy, the great cortège itself appeared, honoured by the protection of mounted Republican Guards and a brigade of foot police, and followed by all the admiring youth of the town.

It was many times larger than life-size. It was crazy. It was a stupendous caricature of life. It was life upside down. The figures were symbols and the symbols were real. The ugliness, the hardship, the folly, and the tyranny of life were pilloried without mercy but without malice. The preposterous masks were only preposterously large; they were not more preposterous than the things they were meant to satirize. And they were funny. They were as amusing and as tragic as a child's drawing of the world. They had colour and sometimes beauty. Certainly

the young women who were the queens of the carnival had beauty. They may have had nothing else, but they had that. And that, as Rodin and Anatole France agreed, for the first and the last time in their long lives full of nobility and honourable disputes, was of considerable importance.

But Harold Lloyd hats and horn-rimmed spectacles have changed all that. The youth of this country is too busy learning the Charleston to remember what the snows of yesteryear were and whither they have departed, and why an old man sings in a forgotten estaminet of cherry time in the Normandy orchards, and why Rodin's garden on the heights of Meudon is overrun with weeds, and why we shall go to the wood no more. There were few signs in the streets of Paris last Mardi Gras, that Carnival had come. The Bourse (at a café opposite which, with characteristic perversity, Hilaire Belloc prefers to read the odes of Horace) was as crowded and as noisy as usual, as noisy but not as rhythmical as partisans at an American football game. The traffic was as intense, as uncontrolled, as capricious, and as homicidal as is normal in Paris. The dull Græco-Roman mausoleum across the Pont de la Concorde which houses the Chamber of Deputies showed no appreciable gaps in its ranks of robust, whiskered, and vociferous Parliamentarians with bulging fat portfolios full of blotting paper and tailors' bills. There was no wide careering air of frenzy in all the city to tell that Carnival was abroad. And the cortège, when it came, was but a

commonplace and tawdry substitute for the vast picturesque processions of other years.

The deplorable fact is that the crowd, the indispensable populo, has transferred its capricious affection to other spectacles. Football, a cross-country race on a cold, wet day across fields full of thawed snow puddles, a bicycle race across France, a prize-fight between a Frenchman and a foreigner (which the Frenchman sometimes wins) and of course, the undying art of the circus — these draw their crowds, full-throated, hearty, and appreciative. The crowds that swarmed over the barricades, that jeered a queen, that tore down the gates of the Bastille and set the prisoners free, swarm now to the playing field and the movies. Mardi Gras has become a mere memory to the aged and a mere Noah's ark of crazy figures to the young. Old King Carnival is as dead as Old King Cole.

A Queen's Chariot

It was an ancient brasserie at the far end of the Boulevard Saint-Germain, past the schools of the folly of our youth and past the bistros of the shame of age, down where the boulevard meets the Halles aux Vins and becomes a ditch, the ditch in which (if tradition is credible) Saint Bernard lived or died. A black boudin full of dried blood and the succulence of green herbs had gone the way of the Chateaubriand, and a cutlet had gone the way of the boudin, before the Frenchman spoke, and then he waxed historical. 'You are dining,' he said confidentially, waving his

table-napkin, 'in the café where the great Verlaine wrote his last verses. This is a very old restaurant of the Latin Quarter.'

We were sitting at the table where the pale Lélian himself sat. In a room which had been the silent witness of the spectacle of his misery we ate a boudin of the blood of the saints and drank a wine of the tears of the martyrs. Unknowingly and blithely, we had communicated. The ghost of Verlaine was there as silent and as ghostlike as Verlaine in the flesh himself. A wild, pale man, writing words like the wailing to a demon lover. Like the unfortunate debtor in Dickens, he grew so like death in life that they knew not when he died.

But the Frenchman told us more. Hard by the Halles aux Vins there was another restaurant of a singular character. Unruly, rough, and proletarian at noon, it was at night, it seems, a place of another sort. Cars came up out of the mist over the river, gliding silently over the bridge of Henri Quatre, and left burdens of perfumed and blasé beauty at the door of the Mère Clothilde. Old men with trembling hands and jewelled shirt-fronts gazed through a monocle at the strings of corrugated sausages hanging from the dark ceiling. The Mère Clothilde communed majestically behind her counter with the shade of Brillat-Savarin. An old man with nondescript whiskers, and a vacant look like the immortal deliveryman of the Dépôt Nicolas posters, emerged at intervals from a Cimmerian cellar, bearing bottles

dark as night and nearly as ancient. There was a little white wine of the Maconnet, with a perfume like a cottage garden in spring, the cottage you were born in. It flowed out of a cask in the hidden cellar like a secret spring of light into bottles that held it but for a moment. And when satiety came with the cheese of Cantal, serenity countered it with a wine of the middle Burgundian region of Fleurie, and the old men with monocles rubbed their ivory old hands and looked at the ruby lights in the wine and dreamed of their youth as an old dog dreams by the fire.

That, as I say, came between Mardi Gras and Mi-Carême, and changed my skies. Other skies had changed, too, and Mi-Carême broke upon Paris with a wild blue light in the heavens and a wild light wind in the town, a wind to make flags flutter, and hearts — a wind from the cave of spring. The midinettes with their light feet and easy manners scampered out of the ateliers at the touch of noon, and their voices and their looks filled the street like a royal wedding. The jeering, pretentious, amusing jazz youth of the medical schools marched six abreast in the boulevards. The Place de la Nation was noisy with the preparations for the Mid-Lent procession like the last night of a fair. The Queens of Paris and the Arrondissements were in their parlours counting out the money they were going to get in beauty prizes. The taxi drivers overslept themselves in royal indifference to the morning, in mind of the equally royal profits they were going to make at the end of the crowded festival,

with a million and more people fighting to be driven home. The limonadiers put out the chairs and tables on their café terraces, counted them, looked at the hot spring sky and measured the immensurable thirst of their fellowmen in Mi-Carême, and then prudently borrowed more chairs from their neighbours.

The lean, over-dressed, hungry-looking men who used to be called boulevardiers walked up the rue Royale past the Madeleine snuffing the eager air like race horses, tapping their cloth-topped, polished boots with ebony canes and calling up spirits from the vasty deep of memory. A short, stout woman with an important air tugged impatiently at the arm of a slow-going, astonished, vaguely uneasy husband from the provinces, who had once been a fonctionnaire and now was merely the best manille player that the Café du Commerce at the corner had known since old Père Troisbouteilles died of the famine in the war of 1870. Children with round knees and wide eyes came out twittering like young starlings and goggling at the queen upon her glittering pantomime chariot. A tall, round-faced boy from a Western State won the beer-drinking championship in a bar in the rue Daunou. A blackbird sang in a tree in the Luxembourg Gardens more loudly than any bird in any city garden is expected to sing. And Spring rode by on her chariot like a queen of Mi-Carême.

The Six Days

There are some things that never drop out and die in the march of progress. When the last trump sounds

The Six-Days Bicycle Race

the high, sad-sweet note of the Millennium Blues and the dancing stops and the sky is dark with airships rushing in their last flight to earth, and silence falls upon the quivering ether, and mankind in its last curious phase makes up its mind to quit, there will still be a Frenchman eating on the terrace of a little Restaurant des Cochers et Chauffeurs, with a wide napkin tucked under his chin, and his battered red taxi waiting patiently at the kerb where his battered white horse used to stand. There will still, Dieu merci, be long-haired young men declaiming the verses of Villon or of Verlaine in the cabaret of the ancient Frédé upon the hill of Montmartre. And over under the shadow of a vast heaven-toppling tower which long since shall have replaced the tiny toy built by the engineer Eiffel in a moment of vainglory, the competitors of the six-day bicycle race will still revolve endlessly in their annual torment under the great glass dome of a renovated Vélodrome d'Hiver. So little does France change.

The six jours of the bicycle racers have become far more famous to this generation than the cent jours of Napoleon. Modern Frenchmen know only two Napoleons. One is fat old Napoleon Poggiale, who keeps a brasserie in Marseilles, and is the biggest political boss in the south of France. The other is the psycho-analyzed, synthetic Bonaparte of the vast motion picture made by Abel Gance. Nowadays people crowd to the six days as they crowd to a first night of a play by Henri Bernstein. They take in the bicycle race as they take in a new night-club, between the

theatre and breakfast in the Bois de Boulogne. Under the high spluttering arcs they parade, between the white-topped tables on the edge of the track, slender, high-voiced silhouettes in silver, in gold, in colours like amber wines foaming in crystal, while their companions, short fat men who are something on the Bourse or nothing in the Chamber, offer rolls of one-hundred-franc notes to speed up the bored and lolling racers.

They are, of course, down in the arena, in the purple glare of the arcs, where assemble the great sporting lights, the lords of industry and the ladies of leisure. Up in the galleries there is a different public. Eager, grimy, perspiring, crimson faces lean over the rail. Hoarse voices refreshed occasionally from dark bottles shout encouragement to Dudu or Titi, whose backs are being broken nightly on the circular track below. Old women with red eyes and red stockings sleep on benches after a forty-eight-hour vigil over the exploits of their sisters' nephews. Young men are there with wild, unbrushed hair sticking up like a porcupine's under their apache caps, a cigarette behind their one good ear. Wide, good-humoured ladies with large families carve food into portions larger than life-size. And there is a vague, generally disseminated odour of charcuterie, sausages, choucroute, Gruyère cheese, beer, the red wine of Algiers, old newspapers, old clothes, sawdust, tobacco, gasoline carried in automatic lighters, worn leather, a football game, the trenches, the barricades, and the Bastille. It is, in short, the people having its night out.

Paris of the Romans

Paris of the Romans

The city which of all modern cities most frequently has been compared to the Babylon of the ancients is almost the youngest of the capitals of the Old World. While the Greeks and the Egyptians were still marvelling at the monuments bequeathed to them by a remote and magnificent antiquity, the southern coast of Gaul lay bare indeed to the greedy gaze and ravishing hand of the Phœnicians. The ruddy coast, bathed by the familiar blue waters of that inland sea which washed the shores of all the charted world, tempted them to land, and land they did, from their dark galleys. Their swarthy skins, their flashing eyes, may yet be identified in the people of the coast between Marseilles and Mentone. But behind the smiling hills lay all Gaul, a land hidden with dark forests, a dim and murmurous unknown. And the adventure of piercing those secret places, of subduing the wild races that inhabited them, the Phœnicians left to the Romans. The traders retreated before a peril that the soldiers braved.

When Marseilles had long been a Roman city, and before it a Phœnician city, the Paris that the Romans later knew as Lutetia was but at most a collection of fishermen's huts near a ford on the Seine. Provence was already a thriving colony of traders and cultivators, whose crops of wheat and oil and wine went annually by galley across the smooth and treacherous sea to Rome, or were stored in secret places, in silo or earthen jar, along the important new

lines of communication rapidly extending northward along the Rhone, and northwestward along the Loire to Brittany. In the shadow of the beautiful old castle of Amboise, in Touraine, a wine merchant will still show you the enormous brick-lined silos cut out of the rocky hill by the first Roman garrison. They were entered from above, and the narrow aperture of each bottle-shaped granary was sealed and hidden in the paved floor of the fortress. The silos have served various and strange purposes in the twenty centuries since they were first constructed by a prudent garrison commander foreseeing a day of peril. They have served as dungeons, into which a luckless man was lowered and forgotten. And more cheerfully as wine cellars. Even at this late day they are in perfect preservation.

When, in the course of the first century before Christ, the Romans came up the Marne to its confluence with the Seine, they found a settlement of Gauls already in existence on the narrow island in the Seine between the four hills of Montmartre, the Buttes Chaumont, Montparnasse, and Sainte-Geneviève. In the year 53 B.C. Cæsar mentioned the settlement of Lutetia, whose inhabitants he described as Parisii. It was to the island city that he summoned the leaders of the Gaulish tribes to receive their submission. And when, in that year, the Parisii, true forerunners of the Parisians of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, rebelled against the domination of the alien armies, they were crushed by Cæsar's general, Labienus, in a battle in which the protago-

nists, like Paris students two thousand years later, struggled on the slopes of what is now the Boulevard Saint-Michel. For the curious history of the Boul' Mich' goes farther back than Murger.

The Romans, like the Gauls, at first confined their city to the narrow island which still bears that name, the Île de la Cité. And there they built a palace which harboured several emperors and from which Julian set out to battle with Constantine. The island was then fortified with ramparts. It contained, besides the palace of the emperors, the barracks of the garrison and the houses of the merchants, a temple of Jupiter, on whose altar traders and passing boatmen sacrificed offerings of wine and corn. For there was good wine grown in Paris then. The hillsides of Auteuil and Suresnes yielded a nectar that appealed even to the fine palate of the Emperor Julian, jaded perhaps with the heavy aromatic wines of Capri or the Greek Islands, and the heavy, harsh wines of Rome. At Suresnes to this day, on the hillside which contains the American Cemetery, a red wine is grown that the Mayor and Municipal Council offer with considerable pride to visitors. It is the last of the wines of Paris.

Under Constantine, Lutetia extended on the left bank of the Seine. The Roman legionaries, faithful to their passion for public games, built a large amphitheatre, of which the relics may still be seen in the Arènes de Lutèce. The rich traders and the Roman

notables gradually deserted the little island fortress on the river for the clearer air and wider view to be enjoyed on the hill of Sainte-Geneviève. And their white villas, Roman in pattern like everything that they built, in their unescapable loyalty of the Roman in exile, rapidly covered the heights which looked northward to the Temple of Mars, on the crest of what is now Montmartre.

For some notable or other — and legend has it for the Emperor Julian himself — the Romans or their enslaved Gauls built a great palace at the present junction of the Boulevards Saint-Michel and Saint-Germain. It was such a palace as had never been built in Gaul before or since, a palace with the magnificent baths of the Romans. Of all that splendour only the ruins of the baths remain. Their blackened stones may be seen in the space adjoining the Cluny Museum. Their discolouration bears tribute to the sacrifice that the sun-loving legionaries made when they marched northward into exile out of the white cities of the Mediterranean; into exile and the mists, the rain, and the gray skies of the barbarian.

III

BRIDGES, STREETS, AND GATES

The Bridges of the Seine

Beautiful as an army with banners, the bridges of the Seine from end to end of Paris, beginning in the east and slipping with the current downstream, are named in this wise: National, Tolbiac, Bercy, Austerlitz, Sully, Tournelle, Marie, Archevéché, Saint-Louis, Louis Philippe, Double, Arcole, Petit Pont, Notre Dame, Saint-Michel, Pont au Change, Pont Neuf, Pont des Arts, Carrousel, Royal, Solférino, Concorde, Alexandre III, Invalides, Alma, Jéna, Passy, Grenelle, Mirabeau, and the viaduct of Auteuil. Thirty pieces of silver, all transmuted into gold when the dying light of the sun falls across them. Drifting down the river as a corpse occasionally floats down the Seine, before it bobs up between two barges and is fished out by goggling-eyed mariners, you will see strange things and hear stranger in a day's journey before sundown. The eastern watergate of the city is an avenue between tree-lined quays and the walled fortress of Bercy, where wine is bonded and vaulted and hoarded; Bercy, which gives its name, and a noble one, to a beefsteak. Then down the river rapidly between tugs and lighters and long lines of brightly painted barges full of cement, gasoline, building stone, coal, and what not, past the Quay of Snuff and the Quay of Austerlitz; past quay

upon quay, and the Jardin des Plantes, full of birds and beasts being sculpted in granite by a patient Spaniard of genius, Mateo Hernandez, and on the twin islands that ride the river like galleons, with the great hooded bulk of Notre Dame on board.

Here we are in old Paris, the Paris of the Romans, the Gauls, the barbarians, the Franks, the Swiss postal-card vendors, the Prussians, the Communards, Anita Loos, Jo Zelli, and the American Legion. The island of Saint-Louis, with the little Restaurant des Mariniers hidden away on its noble old quay, breasts the current like an Argonaut. The ghost-haunted site of the old Morgue, now abandoned for a brand-new and prosaic Medico-Juridical Institute, fades on the right. The Tour d'Argent, full of tourists and pressed ducks and numbered metal tags and the vellum wine list of the Café des Anglais, faces it from the other bank. Westward the spire and the towers and the great metallic nave of Notre Dame, shaped like a Gothic turtle, like a water-horse, like a Leviathan, like the White Whale. This island also, the Île de la Cité, rides the river like an amphibian. It, too, carries many strange things in its hulk, on its great Spanish poop, on its bridge, in its galley. Priests and royalists loiter with slow pride under the gargoyles. A tea room with the terrible sign 'English tea' shouts across the square. Under the high gray roof of the Prefecture of Police, hard by, a patient population of aliens waits all day for identity cards and drives taxis without them all night. The same sun shines through the dusty windows upon policemen and prisoners; on little

old Paul Beyle, the terrible student of the science of crime, matching measurements and finger-prints and blood in test tubes in his death-haunted laboratory; the great detective Faralicq, lean, ascetic, writing poetry between two man-hunts; the great Prefect himself, when he is not prowling about the city at night like Haroun al-Raschid. Over the street is the Palais de Justice, a heavy hilt for the thin silver rapier of the spire of the Sainte-Chapelle, full of white-cravated men with bulging portfolios and floating gowns, full of nervous witnesses and garrulous women, and sentenced men smoking cigarettes in nervous defiance between two bored, fat policemen, full of dust and foul air and hard lying and the century-old memories of lies.

But the Pont Neuf is before us, and the wide air of the Place Dauphine, and old houses toppling down with age, and the great equestrian statue of Henri Quatre, the King who swore an oath that every Frenchman should have a chicken in his pot. You will never more see the white beard and noble head of Anatole France above the parapet of the Pont des Arts, but over the prow of the boat is the Institut and near it the house in which he was born, and in the old domed building which houses the Academy the Immortals still plod indefatigably through their colossal Dictionary, having achieved few pages beyond the words that the malicious Anatole gave them to chew upon. And then past a hôtel where Oscar Wilde spent some of his last unhappy moments, past the Bridge of Carrousel, which is a revolution in itself;

past a bridge which is a régime, to Solférino and Alma and Jéna, three stars in a Corsican artilleryman's imperial crown.

I have forgotten the Louvre, where the Venus de Milo has displaced the last Louis, and the Jocund Lady of Da Vinci ogles generation after generation with her ageless smile. The Louvre gardens are vivid with Dutch tulips, but the black tulip of Alexandre Dumas makes night in no Parisian garden. Here start the toy boats of Paris, the gallant bateaux mouches that rip and snort up and down the river between the Louvre and Saint-Cloud, smaller than the New Jersey ferry-boats but almost as antique. Across the Seine is the great gilded clock of the Gare d'Orsay, always melancholy to me because the Pyrenees Express leaves there nightly and I am not in it. And near by another clock, in a gilt and red-plush room in the Foreign Ministry on the Quai d'Orsay, where the Council of the League of Nations sometimes meets, under the arch, cynical eye of Aristide Briand, and Greek and Bulgar scowl.

But here we are no further than the Chamber of Deputies, and half of Paris lies before us. The Concorde, with its dolphins in their fountains and its Egyptian monolith scrawled all over with strange signs, and amazingly like a drop-scene from the Folies Bergères. The Hôtel Crillon, where Woodrow Wilson lived and Douglas Fairbanks practised vaulting over the balcony. The gray Parthenon mass of the Madeleine. Maxim's in profile like an old actress of the Comédie Française. The Champs-Élysées garbed in

The Pont Neuf and the Old City

green and heavy with the scent of Hispano-Suizas and chestnut blooms. All the new Paris of the heavy Baron Haussmann, who built as for the pyramids. And down the river lie Passy and Auteuil and Suresnes and the Bois de Boulogne. We have come but half our journey. It is a journey that will never be done.

The Gates of the City

Other towns are formless, straggling, thrusting out blind tentacles into a wilderness of suburbs. Greater cities are enthroned on their seven hills, or, like London, have grown monstrous from a reedy marsh. Many places, no less ancient, conceal in their inner heart the small and formal beginnings of their greatness, a citadel of antique valour, a church or monastery, a forum or a fort. But Paris alone remains within the solid entrenchments of its recent fortifications as a mediæval city not yet modernized, its character of a strong place unsurrendered. Paris alone, on the fascinating plan which each tourist carries, a plan that resembles that of no other city, is curiously rounded, like a child's drawing of a castle, and takes a child's pride in its ancient gates, water-gate and land-gate, the gate of pilgrims and the gate of war.

The fortifications are fast disappearing in heaps of builders' rubble, but their strong outlines remain. And long after this generation is dust the place on which they stood will be 'les Fortifs' to unborn generations of wistful apache girls and valiant apache lovers, striving with almost an artist's nostalgia to

revive the violent glories of an earlier day. But if the walls and the forts, the round towers and ramparts and gun casemates have gone or are going, the old ports of the city's stone armour remain. And with them the ancient privileges, the customs-house duties on butter and eggs and chickens and potatoes and gasoline, the old pestilential nuisance to peasants and travellers. Round these gates the life of the city is as noisy, as self-centred, and as curious to observe as in the centre itself. Each gate has its own story, preoccupations, colour, and movement, so that a blind man set down at any of them could immediately tell by the accent, the sound of the traffic about him, at which gate he was.

The Porte Dauphine, with its silent, rhythmical movement of rubber tires on the broad Avenue du Bois, its mingled scents of verdure and automobile exhausts, its bright chirrup of nursemaids and children, chauffeurs and old ladies taking the air — could he mistake that for anything but the Porte Dauphine? Or could he fail to tell the Porte Maillot, with its greater bustle and more strident noise, its loud, arrogant note of salesmen demonstrating new cars or lying about old ones, its cheerful competitive air of modernized Paris, its young sportsmen in fast red Bugattis and even more sporting young men on thin, red bicycles, silent and dangerous?

Other gates have a serener, less strenuous life. The wide air and openness of the Porte de Saint-Cloud, through which the army of Thiers marched in the

last days of the Commune, that gate from which a few months earlier the pale citizens had seen the old château of Saint-Cloud go up in flame. The gate of Auteuil, leading only to quiet streets of quiet, gray houses in gardens, and beyond them, to the Parc des Princes, where pistols were not infrequently waiting in the hands of horribly composed and professionally interested seconds for young gentlemen who had not held their tempers or their wine. The gate of Asnières, with its dull commercial traffic and its hinterland of old, mildewed, only partly commercialized suburbs.

Then there is the gate of Italy, with a name like one of the armies of Napoleon, and as suggestive of forced marches and conquered kingdoms. The gate of Orléans, which leads to the heart of France and the heart of her history, the gate to a straight road through a country of towers and trees and plains and palaces. And the gate of Flanders, the road of the Low Countries, where army after army perished in the swamps, the road along which the Flemish painters travelled to seek their fortune in the royal courts, along which the lace-makers came, and the Norsemen, and the Goths. It has another name now, the Porte de la Villette. The abattoirs are built just inside it, and long processions of Charolais oxen come there to be slaughtered, later to provide the entrecotes to be eaten by hearty cattle-dealers and occasionally by less professional authorities on beef at Dagorno's and the Cochon d'Or. There is the gate of Saint-Ouen, called not after the quarter which adjoins it

but after a great Norman abbey, now ruined; an abbey to which half of France paid tribute, directly or indirectly, and which, in its heyday, maintained a constant and sometimes gallant traffic of courtiers and monks, abbesses and priestlings and princes, between Paris and its own dark cloisters.

There is the Porte des Lilas, of which I know little of interest, and the Porte de Charenton, near a famous madhouse, of which, fortunately, I know less. There is Vincennes, which leads to a great royal château, in which Mazarin died and the infant Louis XV lived; a château, a forest, and a racecourse. There is the Porte de la Chapelle, the gate of the chapel of Saint-Denis, now half ruined and half restored in that strange old city in the suburbs, a city that was once the holy city of France, the tomb of its patron saint and of its kings, the object of veneration and pilgrimage, and now a gray place overgrown with factories and iron-rust, with gipsies and vagrant men encamped among the ruins of its old walls, the very abomination of desolation. And then, last but not least, is the Porte de Clignancourt, familiar to the frequenters of the marché aux puces, from which many a piece of old brass and disinterred curio has gone to decorate a home in Peckham or Pittsburgh.

When you have made the round of Paris from gate to gate, quarter by quarter, watching the strange, changing procession of life through the gates, merchandise entering and departing, the flood of pilgrims, a wedding party leaving for the woods of Saint-

Cloud or the river banks of Meudon, a humble funeral halting at the city boundary to transfer its pitiful burden from the black undertaker's hearse to a less expensive vehicle for the remainder of the ultimate journey — when you have seen this aspect of the city, you have seen more of Paris than you will ever see from the terrace of a café in the Place de l'Opéra, although this attitude possibly has its compensations.

Port of Paris

Whether Landowski's enormous white stone figure of Sainte Geneviève, which now stands like a beacon over the Port of Paris, should have been turned to face the east, in which the river rises and from which the barbarians came to burn and to pillage Paris in the sixth century, or whether, for reasons of lighting, the face of the saint should be turned toward Notre Dame and the west, has now been settled once for all. The engineers of the Municipal Council, arising early one morning, hauled the great statue to the top of its even greater pedestal by the new Pont de la Tournelle and faced it boldly east.

In this probably more historic attitude the protectress of the city turns her back on that immense celestial landscape in which the delicate hull of Notre Dame rises among trees like a ship from a green ocean, that strange and magnificent composition, in part of nature and in part of art; in which the islands of the Seine and their bridges, their roofs and spires and domes, the Pont Neuf, with its proud king on a

bronze horse, tremble with beauty under the great sky at evening when the sun falls like Lucifer in a blaze of sanguine light.

But if the old heart of the city is behind her, the old port and its wharves, the river wide and swirling and full of tugs and lighters, the life and movement of the wine port of Bercy, the Arsenal unchanged since Napoleon's days: these are arrayed under her austere though ardent eyes. The wide flagged quays run down to the water's edge, burdened like a secret harbour in the Bermudas with great casks of wine, awaiting the landfall of a thirsty crew. Barges laden with coal, with cement, with bricks, with lumber, creep by in the train of a loud-chugging tug. Great bales of hay are unloaded on the quay near the Arsenal, making a sweet perfume of country places on the waterside, under the heavy umbrage of the old trees.

On the confines of the port, near the Pont National, which marks the eastern water-gate of Paris, is Charenton. A strange suburb, full of cattle drovers and wisps of straw hanging from low eaves which only half a century ago sheltered a life almost rural, so recently has Paris become modernized and urban. It was to Charenton, in a retreat half prison, half asylum, that the old Marquis de Sade, reformed but not repentant after his curious and still mysterious career — a career that is even now only partially narrated — came to end his days. He had achieved, after notoriety and perhaps satiety, a certain philo-

Modern Paris Architecture, Rue Mallet-Stevens

sophic calm, not unmixed, I think, with some cynical satisfaction at the commercial success of his literary works during the Directory. In a country which has known two historic Bluebeards, and now a third, the cruelties said to have been practised by this modest, shy, and even obsequious little marquis would not have shocked a modern psycho-analyst, or even the readers, nourished on so much gamier meat, of the authoress of 'The Sheik.'

And yet the cruelties which he apparently reserved for women in private life he was singularly averse to in his public relations with both sexes. During the Terror, notwithstanding his patent of nobility, he was a member of a Paris revolutionary tribunal. But he voted always against the death sentence, and his influence was invariably exercised in behalf of the accused. The fashionable society of the Directory, avid of sensations, drove frequently out to Charenton to be diverted by the spectacle of this marquis of many vices ending his tormented days in the garden of a madhouse. He was a good sportsman, and on the stage of the tiny theatre he had built in the garden he entertained them with little satires on the follies of the day. But of his vices, of the hallucinations to which he had been subject in prison, and of which he later made capital in his prodigiously successful literary works, he was silent. In his will he directed that his corpse should be cremated and his ashes disseminated to the winds, in order that he might end in nothing, for in nothing he believed.

It is the river where the Seine enters Paris, curiously enough, and especially all that stretch between Charenton and Notre Dame, which recalls the turbid waters of a tidal river, the heave and motion and colour of a water-way not an hour's sail from the sea. On the other side of the city, where the Seine winds luxuriously through the wooded valleys below Saint-Germain on its long, snakelike course to Rouen and Le Havre, it has become again a pastoral river, green and slow. It has left behind it the torment of the port, the great quays and the long, tree-lined boulevards where the great trucks clatter and roll all day, the Quai de la Rapée with its innumerable little wine-shops and its mingled odours of the country and the town, soldiers and peasants, the tide of industry rolling up and over, drowning in confusion all old simple and brutal things.

For all the hours from dawn till dark the Quai de la Rapée is full of that extraordinary and almost inhuman activity which characterizes these long leafy quays of old Paris. The life of the port, of the river-side, of the wharves where the stone and cement and coal and wine in great casks are unladen from the barges creeping endlessly up on the gray tide, flows all day past the little cafés and their bright zinc bars. The peasants on their way to the Halles, the jovial wine porters with their red faces and the vague odour about them of their heady merchandise stealthy like a slow drug, the coopers from the yards where men hammer incessantly on great barrels, and the lean dry men from the horse dealer's, are among the

familiar clients who handle the greasy cards at a corner table in the cafés, or pause a moment at the shining zinc bar to swallow incredible glasses of red or white wine, in the middle of the conversation, ferocious and stoic, which is the idle talk of men whose lives are spent on the banks of rivers.

But now the river has no longer memory of the long, low outline, green against the brazen sky, of the Jardin des Plantes, with its hot breath of jungle beasts mingling strangely with the peaceful odours of the town. Under Meudon, where Rodin lived, and Bellevue, where Isadora Duncan founded her dance school, and the terrace at Saint-Germain, nearly two miles long, where James II of England walked in exile, the river remembers its youth no more. Until Rouen it will not know again the thrill of shipping, and tall masts swaying lightly in the breeze, and the colour of seafaring men and the wild talk of youth. It will not receive into its gray or green breast the dark waters of the underground rivers of Paris, the waters that flow by the catacombs and the hidden graves, the dark waters of Lethe. It will never see again the old, black, immemorial bathhouses hoisting their bright-coloured linen like pennants, and that strange house upon the waters where Anatole France's Jocaste hanged herself for too much love. It has flowed past now, and cannot recall, the long, low prow of the Île de la Cité and the shadows cast by the high, flickering lamp on the stone steps leading from the Pont Neuf to the little garden of the Vert Galant.

And its waters, green now between the pastures and the chalk cliffs of Lower Normandy, will never reflect again the long, arrowy shadow of the Sainte-Chapelle, or the pointed towers of the Conciergerie, or mirror in their mysterious deeps the gay Paris dawn coming up over the Châtelet.

Streets Under Glass

Nothing is more characteristic of the Paris of the nineteenth century which will soon be no more than those curious passages, or glass-covered arcades, which still communicate with the boulevards. Conceived first by some architect of the Second Empire, transported by his enthusiasm for the new cosmopolitan elegance of which he rightly saw Paris as the international capital, the craze for these protected streets spread rapidly across Europe from Milan to Moscow. They immediately attracted shopkeepers of a peculiar kind. In the height of their success the new arcades were lined with the brightly lit establishments of fashionable jewellers, glovemakers, booksellers, picture dealers and restaurateurs. They provided a natural resort for the flâneur, and in winter a pleasant refuge from the mud-splashing wheels of the picturesque fiacre, which even in those primitive times was considered by the old-fashioned gentlemen to constitute a grave menace to the pedestrian traffic of the city.

Six of these arcades have survived the reconstruction of the centre of Paris — the Passages des Panoramas, des Princes, Jouffroy, Choiseul, and the

less-known little Passages Henri Quatre and Jabach. A seventh, the famous Passage de l'Opéra, known to two generations of boulevardiers, was recently demolished.

The survivors have outlived everything that characterized their period, including its elegance. They are now but dusty ghosts of their own past. The uneven stone paving, the flickering gas lamps, the shabby dress of the shopkeepers, the general air of resignation and decay, speak eloquently of the flight of time, the change in modes, the passing of an epoch. The very kind of commerce done in these glass-covered streets singles them out as remnants of a Paris of an earlier day. The sad establishment of a pastry cook elbows that of a book publisher, one of the few of his race who are still booksellers, and who, unlike the clean-shaven, bright, and cheerful young men in Édouard Bourdet's brilliant play 'Vient de Paraître,' pores all day long in his dimly lighted shop over brown leather bindings instead of organizing literary academies which will award prizes to his own authors. Next to the store of the publisher is the store of a furniture salesman filled with discreet objects not old enough to be antique and not new or eccentric enough to be modern.

Then a little manufacturer of briar pipes, with a narrow window still charmingly crowded with those big Ropp pipes that every art or medical student in Paris once puffed, and other fetishes of the smoker's ritual, in pipe-clay and meerschaum, amber and

cherrywood, making to passers-by a brave show of colour and the promise of a harmless and contemplative joy. Then there is a curious establishment kept by a little man with a large black beard, whose mysterious and imposing titles to medical distinction are enamelled in white letters on the window, and whose window is full of large anatomical models of the human frame partly obscured by rubber masks for the reduction of obesity. A little music shop, the office of a theatrical agent, covered with ancient and almost completely faded photographs; a garish café with at its door the honest apparatus, cheerful brazier, and perfumed merchandise of a chestnut roaster, almost complete the record of one arcade's respectable tenants.

And last but not least is the bric-à-brac merchant. His window is heavy like an old tapestry with infinite little beauties; hundreds of cameos from which exquisite classic features look out upon the loitering idler with the changeless melancholy of a vanished time; many homely miniatures in heavy black frames; several colour-prints of the eighteenth century, depicting a frantic lover and a charming but startled lady; and the rest of the window a tempting maze of coloured stones, old silver, old lace, ivory, and bits of enamel.

Only book lovers and old men renewing their youth care now to frequent these old arcades, so pathetic in their decay. In the exciting moment of metamorphosis through which Paris is living, they are dis-

carded and forgotten as a preliminary to their actual demolition.

And yet, and yet . . . the more Paris changes the more it remains the same. In the city's tempestuous expansion westward, away from the Bourse, which once roughly coincided with the social centre of the city as well as with the commercial centre, toward the Étoile, where the twin pillars of the Arc de Triomphe bestride the body of the Unknown Soldier, the Avenue des Champs-Élysées is rapidly replacing the Boulevard of the Second Empire. For half its grandiose length it is already lined with brilliant stores. One of its restaurants has already rechristened itself the Café des Anglais, in memory of a famous rendezvous of the kings and grand dukes who haunted the boulevards in the eighties. And to perpetuate the charming anachronism, two glass-covered arcades have recently been built on the Champs-Élysées, and there, in a delicately artificial atmosphere of potted palms and synthetic perfumes, of pearls, and thés dansants, and jazz music, and the far-away subterranean splashing of nymphs in the swimming-pool of the Lido below, the golden youth of modern Paris can revive the forgotten sensations of their ancestors of the Second Empire, idling brilliantly on the tree-shaded boulevard.

IV

CAFÉS AND CABARETS

The Cafés of Paris

CONTRARY to popular belief, Parisian women are not beautiful, although it is possibly a heresy for a Paris-lover to admit it. But a day's absence in a provincial or a foreign city suffices to convince one of their superior elegance, their compensating and indefinable chic. That rare quality, the subtle and profound source of their attractiveness, does not belong to the women of Paris alone. Its cafés, its cabarets, all the apparatus of the town's social life, share it in greater or less degree. Less comfortable than the cafés of Berlin or even Switzerland, notoriously unhygienic, often silent of that music which is the soul of Germany, the cafés of the boulevards are still alive, even in these changed times, with that ceaseless and joyous animation which is the heart of the French people.

The cafés of Brussels on a summer night are a grander spectacle. The open windows, the people overflowing in orderly masses into the streets, banked and variegated (that strange word of the horticulturist) like flowers in a herbaceous border; the music surging in waves from the proud orchestra, and sweeping the auditors like wind — that is a moving manifestation of the public passions of a nation. The Belgians, of course, like their cooking, are calmer than the French. They lack that element of surprise

A Boulevard Café

which makes the preparation of food in France a romantic adventure and a highly personal art. They lack, too, that restless intellectual curiosity, that urge to speculation and experiment in life, love, economy, commerce, religion, art, and science which has made of France the paradise of the rationalist as well as the true realm of the artist. The difference between the two nations is spiritually the difference between Paris and Brussels.

A café on the Friedrichstrasse in Berlin is outwardly a very superior sort of Parisian café. It will have music, and flowers, and cooler beer, and the world's newspapers in neat folders, and a service scientifically regulated from the vast, round-bellied director downward in the tremendous hierarchy of the trade. It will be everything that Paris ought to be except Parisian, which is to have a cynical absorption until the last moment of your days in the gallant art of living. A café in Zurich, from which women are severely excluded, a café smelling of cigar smoke, pompous and almost ludicrously comfortable in stiff cushioned leather, illustrated to me once how far from Paris one might travel and be sacrificed on the useless and ignoble altar of bodily ease. Better a bistro in Paris than a stalled ox in Germania, including the Scandinavian.

And yet, and yet, ask me what I conceive to be the type of Parisian café, standard of elegance and fount of wit, and I could not reply. Is it that Café de la Paix at the crossroads of the world; an oasis to which perpetual caravans of tourists make their way, im-

portuned like pilgrims to Saint Peter's by mendicants and vendors, touts and guides, confidence men and sharpers? There all languages are spoken, save only French. There all races mingle, save the people of the land. It is Maxim's, the joyous wicked Maxim's, still odorous with sharp memories of the nineties, still peopled with ageing ghosts of the great days of the grand dukes? Or the Café Weber, which endeavours to keep alive the tradition of the after-theatre supper? Or is it the old Café d'Angleterre on the Boulevard, still popular with a certain fading type of editor and politician? Or the new Café des Anglais on the Champs-Élysées, near that midnight Babylon, the Lido, the latest lure for the young men about town? Or Fouquet's, the glorious, doggish, incredibly sophisticated Fouquet's of Leopold of the Belgians, a part of all that Paris which once was to be seen close-congregated and elegantly quizzing in the enclosure at Longchamp, on the day of the Grand Prix, and which, through all the once sultry months of August and September, disdainfully disappeared from the Parisian scene, leaving the pale city to the concierges and the provincials? That was the heyday of Fouquet's, that age when not to leave Paris after the Grand Prix week was to be condemned to live imprisoned in a shuttered house, simulating absence, to go out only at nightfall, and to frequent only those haunts, east of the Boulevard Montmartre, where an acquaintance, returning to Paris on business, might not surprise you in the inelegant act of slighting the mode.

Or is our type of Parisian café the vast cosmopolitan brasserie of the Left Bank — the Deux Magots, with its spurious literary reputation, its easy patronage of the younger French writers? Or Lipp's, the resort of the literary beer-drinkers, driven to assert an unnatural robustness foreign to their natures? Or the great temples of the touring Bohemians in Montparnasse, the Dome, the Rotonde, the Select, and now the Coupole, terrifyingly illuminated like a street in Berlin? Or a bistro in Montmartre or Montrouge, crowded after midnight with strange characters waiting up to see an execution in the morning, possibly in anticipation of their own?

None of these, perhaps, or all of them. The real Parisian café no longer exists, and probably it never existed. We look for it in vain, and the search gives our lives the adventure that we crave. We look for it everywhere, striving futilely to discover or to create, in the visible world, the sparkling place which we frequent, like old familiars and with elegance, in our mind.

At the Sign of the Black Cat

The Montmartre into which, on a gay morning in the latter end of last century, the cabaret of the Chat Noir was born, was a very different Montmartre from that of to-day. There was no urban haze to conceal the bright colours of the sky above the Place Blanche, where the celebrated Model's Market was still held. The nights were softer then than now, and the faces of women under the trees on the Boulevard Clichy

were enveloped in the mild glow shed upon all things, trees and traffic and tall hats and the swaying figures of women in their long gowns, by the gas lamps of the period. In those days a horse-omnibus with its popular impériale, or open upper deck, climbed from the wine markets to the Place Pigalle. The green-shaded streets were gay with yellow fiacres driven by cabmen in tall white hats. All that Paris of the fin de siècle, painted with passion and a vague nostalgia by the celebrated muralists of the Taverne de Paris, that too-neglected museum of the artists of Montmartre, reached its consummation in the cafés and cabarets and street life of the quarter. The vogue of Montmartre was at its height, and launched on that gay tide, and sailing as much with it as by its own peculiar genius, the newly born Chat Noir attained a celebrity in the four quarters of the world, of which the fifth quarter is Paris.

Its founder, Rodolphe de Salis, was a painter, and his original intention in renting the famous little shop in the Boulevard de Rochechouart was to make a studio of it. But he had long frequented the cabarets and cellars of the Latin Quarter, where amateurs had for some years been admitted, in return for a certain hospitality, to the intimacy of joyous if needy artists, and where the cult of Bohemia initiated by Henri Murger in a famous novel was in full swing. Salis had the brilliant commercial idea of exploiting this weakness of the middle classes for intimate contacts with their more enfranchised fellows, and almost immedi-

ately after its foundation in 1884 his cabaret, with its gay sign painted by Willette, its stained glass and ribald walls, became an institution.

Half Paris rode up the hill in the yellow fiacres to be initiated, with carefully emphasized difficulty, into the rare and delicate intimacy of the painters, poets, and chansonniers of Montmartre. Their hosts were little known then, but most of them, dead or living, have become famous since. Among the painters Henri Rivière, Caran d'Ache, Willette, Steinlen, Abel Faivre, Poulbot, have all passed adventurous years under the sign of the Black Cat. Among the poets, Raoul Ponchon and Jean Richepin. Its most famous singer was Aristide Bruant, whose modern street ballads, written often in the argot of the meanest streets, have the true touch of poetry. Bruant was a faithful son of Montmartre. His fine and picturesque profile, wide hat, and dark cloak, are missed in its narrow streets, and in all the cafés and taverns where the men of genius and the men of lost causes love to gather. Steinlen, another man of the people, one of whose canvases I saw the other day in an antiquary's shop in Touraine, illustrated some of Bruant's most popular songs. They were both sympathetic giants in a time when to be young, and poor, and in revolt against one's time, was an Open Sesame to a certain kind of desperate joy in the Paris of that adventurous age.

Xavier Privas, prince des chansonniers, has also followed Aristide Bruant into the shades. With them passes a generation, or, rather, three generations, of

old Montmartre. Both were poets in their different ways. Bruant struck a sentimental, always popular note, and his sentiment although simple was never false. Privas was a singer of another genre. He was the true minstrel, and some of his verses needed no facile accompaniment of voice and piano to make them ring true in the currency of poetry. It was none other than Verlaine who first recognized the authentic inspiration, the note of the divine lyre, in Privas.

The poet whose songs were sung in the darkness of a desperate life then presided nightly over a gathering of minor poets almost as deplorably poor as himself. They met in a café cellar, in a literary society just founded, with the title of La Plume. Xavier Privas had recently abandoned the respectable profession of real estate agent for the tempting but dangerous one of chansonnier, and had left the vast bourgeois city of Lyons for the tiny village of Bohemia, then bounded by Montmartre. When he made his début at the Plume, Verlaine happened by good luck to be present. And hardly had the young chansonnier stammered rather than sung the first few stanzas of his 'Lute-Player' than the unkempt, pale, and pitiful head of the great poet raised itself from his absinthe and Verlaine cried enthusiastically: 'Do it again, my boy, do it again.'

From the Plume to the glories of the Quat'z Arts, the Noctambules, and the Chat Noir was but a series of steps, steps that are cut in the history of the last forty years of Bohemian Paris. And now the lute-

player is no more, and almost the same day that brought this news brought news of the death of another famous inhabitant of the same romantic country, Botzaris, the black cat of Steinlen.

If Baudelaire was the poet of cats, Steinlen was their painter, and he has left a portfolio full of drawings and paintings of his favourite friends. Botzaris, the preferred, used to sit on the shoulder of the artist, and for hours he would follow the tracks of Steinlen's pencil with his grave, unwinking eyes. There was a time when a cat and a garret and a window looking over the roof-tops of Paris were all of romance to a young man.

They are all dead except Ponchon, who has been called the Prince of Poets. But in a crowd of cabarets in Montmartre their drawings or their verses are cherished. When the original Salis retired to a château in Normandy the incomparable possessions of the old Chat Noir were sold by auction and dispersed among many hands. Some fell into those of the present Chat Noir in the Boulevard Clichy, which has succeeded more or less in maintaining the exterior characteristics of its great predecessor. Some went to the old restaurant of the Bon Bock, in the rue Dancourt. Some went to collectors, French and foreign. The remainder passed into the common heritage of the obscurer cabarets of Montmartre.

The cabarets of Paris, which have taken the name of the wineshops of the Middle Ages, are properly

places where men may drink and men may sing. The only difference between the modern cabarets and the old is that nowadays the singers are more or less professional. The audience of drinkers, in the modern Parisian cabaret, sit at rude, rough, oak tables, sipping from little glasses in which a cherry, or a plum, or a greengage perishes slowly in strange alcoholic fires. In these places chansonniers who have graduated in the harder classical school of the Chat Noir appear now before less sophisticated audiences, singing those spiced and almost unseizable snatches which have provided for Parisians since the days of the Emperor Julian a satiric comment on the social comedy of the day.

Old Xavier Privas, who since the death of Aristide Bruant had become the dean of the chansonniers of Montmartre, sang until recently at the Chat Noir and the Vache Enragée, on the hill which will always be sacred to the memories of Bohemia. Lower down in the Faubourg Montmartre, the singer Fursy, who also belonged to the great school of Montmartre cabaretiers, maintained the old traditions, until his death in the spring of 1929, in an establishment named after himself and his colleague Mauricet. Among other cabarets classified more or less ingenuously as artistic, there are the Pie qui Chante, the singing magpie, in the rue Montmartre; the Chaumière, in the Boulevard de Clichy; the Lune Rousse, in the rue Pigalle; the Moulin de la Chanson, in the Boulevard de Clichy; and the Quat'z Arts, in the same boulevard. On the Left Bank, in the quar-

ter of the students, there is the famous cabaret of the Noctambules, which inspired the founder of the Chat Noir, and the Grillon, in the Boulevard Saint-Michel. And in a narrow street off the Place Saint-Michel, in an old crypt older than most of Paris, as old perhaps as Notre Dame itself, is the little cider-shop of the Bolée de Cidre, frequented by many famous in the annals of Bohemia.

The Grande Semaine

The burning light of midsummer strikes Paris at its gayest. The Grande Semaine, grand climacteric of the frenzied and diligent dressmakers, has recurred in the slow and intoxicating procession of the seasons. The big week brings its swift succession of social spectacles, the Drags and the Hurdles, the Grand Prix and the Grand Steeple. The restless crowd moves in giddy circles under the great trees at Longchamp and Auteuil. Against that vivid green, the vivid colours of coquetry are blurred like a too-bright frieze. The horses themselves arch their beautiful necks as if conscious of their dangerous part in the dazzling spectacle. The proud horses and the proud women, moving silkily, and even the crests of the great trees stirring in the thin air like a cat caressed slowly — they are the conscious players in that golden pageant of life which to an interested spectator, half admiring and half bewildered, half tolerant and half cynical, is the glittering, mirrored reflection of cosmopolitan Paris.

The carnival of Paris, recurrent like a fair, moves

like a planet upon its own axis. The more its changes the more it is the same thing. The great features of Parisian life are threatened and are destroyed. Banks and other ruthless invaders of the polite society of the last century raise upon the ashes of great restaurants their pillars of glass and steel. This was the fate of the Maison Dorée and the Restaurant Durand, the Café des Anglais, and many another temple of the extinguished boulevardiers. But the Restaurant Viel, a famous and characteristically Parisian restaurant of the boulevards recently destroyed, has now been revived. The Café des Anglais has reappeared, in at least its title, but now upon the Avenue des Champs-Élysées, which becomes more and more the main artery, the fashionable boulevard, of Paris. With a phœnix-like vitality, the new Lutetia rises upon the ruins of the old, and the Watteau carnival of light hearts continues in a new guise.

Of all the haunts of that old Paris in which the Père Viel, then a modest wine-seller, attracted the society of artists and diplomats, politicians and writers, by his art of cooking, in the brown-fronted bistro which preceded the fashionable restaurant of his wealthy years, only a few bars and taverns, dance halls and cabarets remain. The Grand Café, which once made a large and distinguished inroad upon the sidewalk space of the boulevards, has been gone several years. The Café de la Paix, it is true, preserves unbroken its magnificent traditions. But between the Place de la Concorde and the Faubourg

Montmartre, in that mile and a quarter runway which has for a century been trodden deeply by the feet of all the men of genius, all the men of politics, all the men of the world and the underworld, racing men, pamphleteers, poets and drunkards, men of many vices and wide popularity, nothing is left to remember them by but two taverns, the Chatham and Henry's.

Behind its deep-bayed windows and its brown exterior, its throng of chauffeurs and touts and tipsters darkening the doorway, the Chatham bar conceals all the intense, active, and disturbing life of the men who loaf professionally in the most seductive loafing city in the world. Its dark drinking-rooms, cool in summer like a captain's room in an Eastern harbour, are filled twice a day by the strong and heady tide of men going to and coming from the races. A ticker, in a quiet recess, pours all day its white flood upon the floor. The walls are covered with paintings in the romantic Spanish style, recalling faintly the coloured labels on a bottle of imitation port. But underneath that dim, attractive bronze, the vaguely disturbing panels in their frame of dark wood lend a peculiar distinction to the place, like the creole women in Baudelaire's poems. The bartenders, who speak French with an acquired Italian accent, very useful in French bars, show to the newcomer that fascinating professional indifference which is the very seal and hallmark of success.

Another celebrated resort which has hardly changed in character, Henry's bar in the rue Volnay close by, was, after the Chatham, the second to open in the

fashionable heart of Paris a generation and a half ago. It is still, with its remarkable Mallet panels, an exact mirror of the fashions of Paris at the end of the last century. The tall, tranquil women, with their long black robes and graceful silhouette, look down from their background of dull gold upon the ageing lineaments and graying shadows of the men who still enter the bar, as a quarter of a century ago, with their neat field glasses slung behind them, and before them, at the end of the races, a thin glass of amber wine, beading slowly at the brim.

No other bar or tavern that I know in Paris recalls so clearly and preserves so faithfully the golden and dazzling generation whose styles and habits now seem to us so deliciously preposterous, with the single exception of the Taverne de Paris, in the Avenue de Clichy, where the great murals of Steinlen and Willette keep for centuries to come the last vision that will ever be seen of the clear evening light in the streets of Paris before the automobiles came, and the great, quiet pageant and rich silence, broken only by the dull, rhythmical hoofbeat of horses, of the morning promenade in the Bois de Boulogne. In this quarter, between the Place de Clichy and the gate of Saint-Ouen, I noticed recently a number of bals musettes, struggling vainly to compete with the louder and more mechanical jazz, the smoother and more subtle rhythms, of the modernized dance halls. The one-man band worked gallantly on his throne, his arms bare and his neck bare, a dark, muscular man

with a rolling eye, a hoarse voice, and an extinguished cigarette hanging from one corner of his mouth. He drummed and clashed the cymbals, he crashed great savage rolling chords out of an accordion, he strove with all the power of his six instruments to revive for an indifferent public the melancholy, the haunting melancholy, of the dance music of the wicked nineties. But the jostling crowd on the sidewalk, hearing already the familiar and intoxicating strains of Tin Pan Alley from the orchestra of a neighbouring motion-picture theatre, moved eagerly into the warm darkness and the securer presence of Harold Lloyd.

The Men from Maxim's

A herd of goats has just gone down my cobbled street in Montmartre, following the piping of a man with a brilliant red coat. How charming the rue de la Paix would be if it were fuller of fast colours than of fast cars! At present its only high lights are the green-liveried chasseurs of the hotels and the mahogany-tinted complexions of the old English racehorse trainers leaving the Hotel Chatham. Notwithstanding the heroic efforts of Maurice de Waleffe, no graceful if manly figures in heliotrope knee-breeches have yet made their appearance in this quarter of Paris, and none are likely to. Breeches and buckles went out with gold-headed canes, painted snuffboxes, the shepherdesses of Watteau, the three-bottle men, the dolorous tic and early piety. The sands in the glass have long run out, and we are boiled hard. When

that Montmartre goatherd has piped his last and his goats have ceased to skip on the narrow, paved streets of the hill, and the old zinc comptoir of the Café de la Lune has been torn out to make way for a high mahogany bar and a man in a white coat and the whole glittering machinery for making three drinks do the work of one, the Paris of the eighties will have disappeared.

The France that was France, the Paris that knew Whistler and De Maupassant and Verlaine and Rémy de Gourmont and Pierre Louys and the early indiscretions of Clemenceau and Millerand, the Paris of the days when men wore whiskers and dyed their hair and fought over courtisanes in the Parc des Princes and rode madly about in barouches and cheered the hesitating General Boulanger at his window in the rue Royale — Paris the Gay City, the Ville Lumière, will have faded into a mere memory. Old men will still sit over their dyspepsia in the evening of their days and recall Voisin's when four kings dined there, and the Café des Anglais when an English duke fell down the stairs and broke his neck, and a famous vaudeville dancing girl for a wager ran across the boulevard from one celebrated restaurant to another clad only in her slippers. But when they move feebly from their chairs to take the gasoline-laden air of the boulevards under the heroic trees, long in dying, their eyes are dazzled by a new chemical landscape of jazz bars and jazz cars and by a terrifying fresco of sky-signs and moving electric fingers pointing to the end of an epoch.

The Men from Maxim's

There is still, of course, the anachronism called Maxim's. That curious cabaret, full of stale elegance and the dead gilt of an imitation empire, has survived the death of two kings, has triumphantly come out of a war, has seen Montmartre rise and fall and rise again, has seen the boulevards change and wither and the Champs-Élysées bloom and bloom again. The tide of traffic and fashion, of commerce and elegance, has swept by without taking Maxim's with it westward, and still it remains, the extreme oriental outpost of the high life and the low life, the bright life and the night life of the fashionable underworld. The men from Maxim's saw the Entente Cordiale conceived between the caviar and the champagne. Kings were let out of its unostentatious side door by obsequious maîtres d'hotel. Detectives drank at its bar like dragoons, listening with awe to stories of Maxim's greatest drawing-card, the mistress of the mad King Ludwig of Bavaria. And night after night the painted walls rang to the old, ageless music of glass tinkling upon glass.

Maxim's, I suppose, is the last fortress of the nineties. When it falls a whole century fades with it — the greatest century in the history of scientific achievement. It will have seen the end of the horse age. By the time it disappears from the antique landscape the streets will be full of machines and men will be groping under the earth in tunnels. It will have heard the old music die in a maze of discordant sounds — the waltz outmoded by the cancan; the

cancan displaced by the rattling and shuffling one-step and the one-step ousted by the tango, and the tango by the Charleston. The accordion has replaced the fiddle, and the saxophone the accordion. The 'Blue Danube' waltz, once the most matchmaking melody ever heard in ballrooms, has made way for other colour-schemes in music, and the prevailing colour is black.

The captains and the kings have departed, and the fashionable cabarets are full of motion-picture directors and yesmen-about-town. All the brilliant young Frenchmen are writing in English, and brilliant Dutchmen like Van Dongen are painting in French. Young musicians like George Antheil have deserted music for engineering, and are building symphonies out of aeroplane propellers, steam whistles, merry-go-rounds, worn-out race-horses and beer-engines. Everybody has recently had a craze for editing, and the Ritz Bar has become an anteroom to society journalism. It has, of course, long been the escalier de service to society. The Totalisator has raised its white concrete tower on the green background of the Longchamp racecourse, and the beautiful Old Brown Windsor exterior of the Chatham is fast disappearing under the malicious and hell-inspired hand of a modern decorator. Bartolozzi-red sunblinds have appeared on the white hotel fronts, and the last of the fiacres, decrepit and incredibly old, have appeared to tempt the sentimental tourist on the street. The literary Prix de la Renaissance has

been granted to a former ship's captain named Paul Chack, a modest Joseph Conrad, for his novel 'The Sea Fight.' A former Pullman porter, Willie Morgan, has turned a former bistro in the Avenue de la Bourdonnaise into a restaurant under the sign of the Chicago Inn. And the men from Maxim's, the Die-hards of the nineties, have taken out from cupboards the white spats of their misspent lives, ironed their hard gray hats, waxed their bristling gray mustaches, and, screwing monocles for the last time into their undimmed Frank Harrisian eyes, have just gone to meet the boat train that is bringing an American motion-picture star to Paris.

The Bright Pageant

A dark, wild chorus, the music of the sweet melancholy of the streets of Montmartre, swept out in the dark room, over the shadowy heads of singers and listeners, out of the lit square of the open window, to crowd with sudden sharp memories the silence of the hilly street. Under a flickering gas lamp the profile of a corner, a high stone wall, a tree etched in inky shadows, a couple effaced in the remotest darkness, created on this summer night, as on every night, a picture which the Montmartrois carry in their hearts like a charm, as the synthesis of this old quarter of Paris. Within the room, full of dim warmth and half-seen suggestive figures with faces now dark, now luminous, faces as Rembrandt saw them in the warm fire of hearth and candle, the vast, shambling old man who has run the cabaret almost, it seems, since the

beginning of time moved among his clients like a bull roaring through a herd. Against the low doorway a woman, sitting withdrawn in the shadow, passed her white hands sleepily over the strings of a great gold harp, a harp whose head, carved like a seraph, rose into the dim ceiling, and whose gold gathered all the vague light in the room. There was a restless chinking of the small glasses upon the rough oak tables. A dog barked once sharply. Old Frédé shouted for silence, and then shuffled down the steps among the copper pans and bright bottles of his kitchen. And then a young man in a red shirt, lean and dark, with burning eyes, sang in a sweet, haunting voice the song of 'Le Chemin Creux,' the hollow road between meadows, the long lane of our youth that has no turning until the grave.

There are, roughly, four kinds of cabarets in Paris. Those of the poets, like the Lapin Agile and Alexandre Mercereau's old debating society, where the Jockey now is, on the Boulevard Montparnasse, a place where poets met for mutual praise. Those of the satirists, like the Chat Noir, in the Boulevard de Clichy, and other cabarets, named like the signs of the Zodiac. Those of the champagne growers, whose name is legion. And, last in chronological order, but not least in price, the cabarets of the Cossacks. Of them all, the first two categories are the most Parisian, truly indigenous to the soil. Anything is fair game to the satirists — Cécile Sorel; the late Paul Deschanel, who fell from a Presidential train and was found walk-

ing along the track in his pyjamas; the manners, the morals of all the celebrated, living and dead. But there is no young generation of singers who can improvise a witty line that will send the town laughing. The stars of the little cabarets are all old or oldish men. Aristide Bruant, the greatest of them all, who could be sentimental or satirical by turns, and with equal success in each manner, is dead, and has not been replaced. Fursy, the bird-like little Fursy, with his droll mouth and arch eyes, is dead, and no longer in the business. But the business is no longer what it was. The satire of a mute figure, eloquent only in wordless gestures, eloquent every day and twice daily, against a background larger and happier than life, has diverted a public avid of sensation, eager for emotion. The art of the cinema is slowly destroying the art of the cabaret, and a scenario writer will one day be remembered against Aristophanes.

And so we fall back on the champagne growers, crying for madder music and for stronger wine. The scores of Tin Pan Alley, as read through a glass darkly by the orchestras of the rue Fontaine and the rue Pigalle, continue to create the jungle noises proper to modern dancing. In the intimate nocturnal contact of the swaying mob persons who in the daytime are dead strangers greet each other with loud signs of satisfaction, like the jungle creatures slinking through the daylight silent and morose, but trumpeting at midnight. From our warm plush seat in the all-night cabaret we look upon the moving

scene with approval. In the mirrors that wall the room the spectacle appears like one seen in a dream. The half-darkness, the bright pool of light flung on the floor, the dancer immobilized between life and death, the heavy, rich colours, the blue smoke-whirls eddying in the draught of an electric fan, make a bright, dreamlike, Dégas picture. If life could always be imprisoned like this! If the pageant could go on forever, unwinding itself in bright colours from the cradle to the tomb!

But, fortunately perhaps, the spell is broken and the adventure ends. The royal box dwindles like all royalty. The bright vision fades. The dark orchestra disappears in a flash of white teeth, to continue tirelessly until morning in some other, more intimate, purely professional cabaret, where life never breaks off suddenly in the middle of a bar.

For the Russians, as for the man in that moving, brilliant play of Tolstoy's 'The Man Who Was Dead,' there is no break in the cabaret performance, no break until the thread of life snaps. The figures in their dim restaurants in Paris — cabarets like caravans, hung with musk-smelling rugs like a Tartar's tent — whether guest or hired artist, seem to have been there from the beginning, watching Fate with dull, indifferent eyes, and the small, bright bubbles rising in the glass.

Cafes Out of Mind

Cafés Out of Mind

What is Paris to us, in the latter-day search after sensation, but the excitement of adventure shared in recollection? Even if life has become merely one café after another, it might be considerably worse. All the modern pursuit of material success is merely, in essence, the pursuit of the companionship one desires. Rembrandt painted, I am convinced, not because the curious values he esteemed and created and threw into the later consideration of art were clear and inevitable to his unconfused vision, but because he craved passionately to enter as an equal into the highly coloured and passionate world in which he saw men like giants walking.

Of all great drama, only the actors and the spectators are essentially equal and interdependent. Hence the varying, many-sided dramatic characters of the Renaissance artists, the Da Vincis and Cellinis and Michael Angelos. They were a part of their time. With the mystic or the poisoner, the amorist or the politician, they were at one. Cellini was a cherished guest at all the parties going. Between Park Avenue and Park Lane there is not a gayer observer of the follies, the passions, and the ennuis of his time. If he had once lived in Paris, like Dante, he might have founded Montparnasse, might have piled the first mountain of soucoupes at the Dome, might have been ejected from the Rotonde, might have walked the streets until the gay, incredible dawn, seeing the sun rise over the Seine and the Pont Neuf

and the gray city spires and domes and bridges emerge faintly out of the rosy mist.

But if life is merely one café after another, one by one the great cafés disappear. The material evidences of our adventurous past are vanishing. In a few years you and I, meeting on a platform of the Eiffel Tower, will look down on a Paris entirely reconstructed. In a few years, in a space of time in which the useless sciences have progressed with an incredible and terrifying rapidity, the useful arts and the pleasant habits have incredibly and terrifyingly decayed. In less than the time taken by the bourgeois Baron Haussmann to erect his white sugar-cake buildings and boulevards, the centres of human companionship which have survived eight centuries were destroyed or dissipated, were forgotten or torn down. Their very names mean little more than nothing, although a revolution sprang from one and a monarchy died in the other.

A small, faded sign shaped like a medallion at the corner of the rue de Seine and the rue de Visconti indicates the site of the ancient Cabaret du Petit More, a cabaret that Rabelais knew, and Boileau and Racine. It was there that the impatient and incorrigible wine-tippler, Saint-Amand, wrote his last verses and died, having accepted a challenge and drunk water for the first time in his life. His loyal companion, the Comte d'Harcourt, is remembered by posterity in the title of a famous café in the Boulevard Saint-Michel — now, alas! transformed beyond

recognition. But Saint-Amand, the first martyr in the pantheon of wine, has no great café to celebrate his name. The Café des Anglais, where an English duke fell down the stairs and an English heir to the throne was hurried out of a side door in time to avoid the corpse, the Café des Anglais of the great boulevardiers, is destroyed and thrown to the winds, and on its ashes a bank rises in concrete and steel. The Café Durand and the Maison Dorée, both temples of the age when men with gold-headed canes and snuffboxes and green waistcoats and long waxed mustaches walked mincingly down the boulevards, are equally no more. They were the cafés of a later age than the Petit More, when wine was no longer drunk out of pewter tankards but decanted delicately out of bottles in wicker baskets, and the light, dazzling, scandalous conversation of the day was held over strange and recently invented liqueurs sipped from thin glasses.

The large, robust, Rabelaisian habits of the earlier epoch had given way to manners more refined. The tavern lass of the Petit More, entertained to a hearty country wine in a pint pot and able to take her part in a vast, noisy jesting match at the rough oak table of the cabaret, surrounded by lolling poets and drunken lords, was succeeded after three centuries by the ladies of the ballet, high-kicking and high-ambitioned, thirsty for champagne and greedy for caviar. But nothing in essence had changed. Under its thin skin of civilization mankind remains, fortunately, the same. And so just after the war one

saw the curious phenomenon of fashionable French society invading the wineshops and brasseries of the apache quarters, drinking rough wine and eating worse food with gusto, in a valiant attempt to experience the simpler emotions of a simpler age.

But in Paris alone does one note relics of the great age ignored and incredibly neglected. The palaces of the old Marais Quarter, the Hôtel Beauvais, and a score of splendid mansions fallen now upon evil estate and repute, are like the names of the bishops who wrote the Jacobean version of the Bible — lost, forgotten, and out of mind. A like destiny has befallen a café once historic, the Café Procope. It is a bouillon now, dark, melancholy and deserted. Upon the faded inscriptions on the walls, upon the great stove, the tarnished mirrors scratched over with famous names, its present clients cast dull, indifferent eyes. But Voltaire with his withered, malicious face once frequented this ghost-haunted room, Rousseau was among its clients. Danton and Marat spoke frequently at the club meetings held there. When the King's men came to arrest the Friend of the People the Procope's clients darkened the street to block their way. And when Benjamin Franklin died the café was hung in black, a flower-crowned bust of the representative of the young American Republic was set up in a place of honour, and from the wrought-iron balcony of the Café Procope black letters on a wide linen streamer ominously announced 'Franklin est mort.'

The Decadence of Paris

The Decadence of Paris

The pride of a little family in the provinces in a brilliant if slightly dissipated son, absent in the metropolis, is not more apprehensive than the pride of the French provinces in the city of Paris. Remote, elegant, and haughtily, even insolently, wicked, like the dark hero in 'Jane Eyre,' the capital inspires the French peasant or the French provincial, safely immured among the dull bourgeois virtues of his small town, with mixed feelings of horror, attraction, and curiosity. His deeps are stirred by the promise of so much doom, as the sons of Lot must have been moved to an unwilling and terrible admiration at the swift oncoming fate, monstrous but magnificent, of the cities of the plain. The fabled wickedness of the capital, discussed solemnly in the local Café du Commerce, whispered between trains in the vast, cathedral-like French railway buffets, recounted in travellers' tales, chills the single strain of blood in the peasant's robust and regular-pulsing veins that is not entinctured with the heartier stream of Rabelais. And upon the elegant and posturing Parisians who descend each summer upon his rural solitudes, with fantastic attitudes and accents, and clothes like a caricature, he looks with the deep brooding suspicion, mingled with envy and humility, that the antique voyagers aroused — home among humbler and duller mortals from a journey in Cathay.

And yet this legend of the wickedness of Paris — how remote from the modern reality it is! Notwith-

standing the crusade of the earnest Père Bethléem against the licence of the satirical weeklies exposed for sale on those news-stands that make a bright patch of colour on the boulevards of Paris, the morals and manners of the people are not those of another time. In the country of Rabelais and Voltaire, the slightest frankness in a play or a novel causes a stir of uneasiness among the public, and a flutter of interest among the moralists. But the nude, as André Antoine recently prophesied, has disappeared from the stage, and has reappeared in a more natural setting on the beach at Deauville and Cannes. And the dress of the Parisians has notably changed in a century. If the knees of the women are visible to-day, their hips were freely displayed in the amazing period of the Directory. And the unchecked frankness of the eighteenth century would cause a modern Paris vaudeville director to throw up, in envy and mock despair, his eloquent, gesturing hands.

But the eighteenth century was tame and puritan in comparison with the Middle Ages. The marvellous flowering of Christian art in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries was accompanied by the liberation of many pretty imaginations. The humour and the piety of the stonemasons who builded and carved the great Gothic cathedrals of France took often a grotesque and sometimes a diabolic form. And many an honest old priest has counselled his flock against sorcery, witchcraft, unnatural passions, and all other inventions of the devil in the grinning and obscene company of as curious a collection of caricatures

carved in stone as ever graced the house of a pagan like Anatole France. And as a modern writer has pointed out, no monarch of these times ventures to make a state entry into a subject city like that of the pious emperor Charles Quint, who rode into the Low Countries accompanied by a dozen of the fairest women of the land garmented only in their beauty, which surely was insufficient protection against that damp and chilly clime.

The truth is that we are greater hypocrites than our ancestors, and the works of Shakespeare, Rabelais, Diderot, and Voltaire, if published for the first time to-day, would be burned in the market place like Joan of Arc.

But as well as less wicked, is Paris less gay? Is that brilliant and almost general life of the end of last century, that round of parties of pleasure, that pageant of beauty and sparkling play of wit, which made Paris the intellectual as well as the social capital of the world, now come to an untimely end? The manners of the people have changed little. Business, it is true, begins later than it did. Luncheon begins later and lasts less long. Dinner begins later and finishes earlier. But the theatre still ends before midnight, and that old institution of the after-theatre supper, gay and animated, which filled the restaurants of the boulevards and the brasseries of even remote quarters of the town with an agreeable liveliness that lasted until dawn, has not been generally resurrected since the war. The old-fashioned Saturday night party of

the Parisian bourgeoisies, which began with dinner in a restaurant, continued at the theatre, and ended with supper in a fashionable cabaret, where the young ladies of the company, fresh from their convent or their dame's school in the suburbs, had their first delightful peep at the dangerous joys of the demi-monde, is completely dead. The automobile, enforcing economy in other costly distractions, has changed the week-end habits of the Parisian to this extent — that going to bed early on Saturday night, he spends the twenty-four hours of Sunday in touring the countryside in the neighbourhood of the capital, to the great encouragement of the brand-new and brilliant inns that have sprung up during the last five years on all the roads out of Paris.

Thus the peasant, after all, has the victory. The legendary Paris to which all the younger sons of the peasantry migrated, the bold bad Babylon of our times, is now deserted by them for the once despised joys of the country — the simple virtues known to the Romans, who were epicures if there were any, and had experienced in all its phases that curious physical and emotional reaction which in the American language is vividly described as a hangover — the hangover from pleasure, the hangover from power. For they who in their magnificent time had known all the vices came in the end to cherish, if only in their decadence, the old simple virtues. And thus, in his own time, can a wicked man be brought to repentance.

V

MONTMARTRE

The Lapin Agile

THE fantastic little cabaret of the Lapin Agile, which meant old Montmartre to so many people, French and foreign, that at last it convinced even old Montmartre itself that it had a right there, now threatens to disappear. Time and tide and taxes have swept up and broken upon the sturdy head of its proprietor, old Frédé, with his villainous rabbit-skin cap and long white beard full of tobacco-stains and nobility. Frédé can no longer pay taxes and feed hungry though picturesque young poets if there are no tourists to swarm into his low-ceilinged cottage, with its red curtains and red copper pans and red-shirted young men and red-eyed dogs and pink-eyed tame rats creeping in and out of the old tree-trunk that grows astonishingly enough in a dim corner of the cabaret. And since the tourist business is bad, Frédé is closing down.

The Lapin Agile is almost the last remnant of the old Butte of Montmartre. For some years the cabaret has been gradually submerged in the rising tide of modernization that has swept over and swallowed up almost all the vague lands on the slopes of the Butte. What was forty, thirty — and even ten — years ago the celebrated 'maquis,' a waste lot

squatted on by nondescript, vagabondish men, painters and gipsies, living in ramshackle huts and tents and rude shelters of wood or old iron, has gradually been reclaimed. Apartment buildings and eccentric but expensive studios now raise their painted or plastered walls where only five years ago yelling troops of young Montmartrois, learning thus early to be painters or apaches, disported themselves in the rusty wilderness. The gaunt arms of the old Moulin de la Galette still creak in the wind, but the dirty, picturesque old mill itself is dwarfed by its strange new neighbours.

The rabbit escaping from a casserole on the inn sign painted by André Gill as a pun upon his own name, after the jovial custom of that day, has made the little cabaret famous. Two generations of youth, native and foreign, have stumbled down the steep cobbled street from the Sacré Cœur after dinner at the Mère Catherine's. Two generations of youth have swung into the little garden, where a rude table stands under the gnarled tree, and halted, a little confused, at the sounds of music issuing from the open windows, music and warm light, and the vague nostalgia of youth in the short summer night. Inside there are chinking glasses at the zinc bar within the doorway, glasses and bottles full of liquors green and red, and the red light of copper pans nailed high against the ceiling. And farther inside still, up two steps and beyond the curtain, is the room where old Frédé himself leads the choruses, shaggy and hoarse as his own old dog.

Behind the door a great harp stands, or stood. The old man has a 'cello somewhere and a cunning hand for most instruments. His young men strum the guitar a little, enough to accompany their ardent French voices speaking their own or another's verse. That other is more often than not Verlaine or Baudelaire, both poets of youthful despair. Whatever other stars may be eclipsed in the poetic firmament, have their day and be forgotten, the vogue of these twin genii of melancholy and despairing youth still persists in France. And you have never known the full voluptuous sorrows of healthy adolescence if you have not listened, a little amused, and a little touched, fingering a small glass from which the syrupy liquor has long since departed, to a young man with a slightly hoarse voice recite 'L'Invitation au Voyage.'

There was a time when the Lapin Agile had a less sentimental atmosphere. Years before the war, before Carco and Apollinaire and Salmon flocked there with their brotherhood of half-starved Bohemians, the wineshop of Frédé had another clientèle and another name. It was then the Cabaret des Assassins. Fittingly enough for a place on the edge of the wilderness that the Butte then was, it was a drinking-den of bandits. Gunmen and apaches swaggered in and out of it. Knives were freely drawn there. Now and again an inoffensive and unwitting stranger, entering the cabaret for refreshment, would find himself edged out into the street by the cold and ominous stares of

the habitués. And he was lucky to escape so lightly. Even the police would not venture across its threshold save in force.

Legend has it that a knife drawn too often and a murder too many broke up the agreeable company of the Assassins. The bandits left for the guillotine or for penal settlements in the tropics, and the Bohemians, mild and harassed young men staggering under the heavy burden of their genius, filled their place. That was the heyday of the Lapin Agile. The rabbit was never more active than then. The fortunes of the cabaret have often varied since and are at their lowest now. When it goes there will be nothing left of old Montmartre but the village square on the top of the hill, the garden celebrated in 'Louise,' the little mairie in which Georges Clemenceau officiated during the Commune, fifty-six years ago, and the wooden sails of the windmill lower down the hill.

Rude and decaying enough the Lapin Agile looks in the harsh daylight — a dreary, slapstick Greenwich Village show-place — but at night, with its red-lit windows and the hearty noise of singing; at night, when the solitary gas lamp on the street corner makes strange shadows in the wind, old Frédé's vast beard and rabbit-skin cap and chuckle are authentic enough. The house is vague and eerie under the gnarled tree, the kitchen warm, the music haunting. When it is no more we shall think of it, and with it of all Montmartre, as a powerful part of that old faint

The Cabaret of the Lapin Agile

nostalgia, enduring through many years, which we call youth.

Montmartre of the Poets

Stumbling down the steep hill from the Sacré Cœur and the Place du Tertre on a windy night, when the old wooden shutters on the painted house rattle against the pink walls, the red-curtained windows of the cabaret of Frédé are like red squares painted on a stage curtain. There is a stunted tree that hangs over the front of the low house like a tree out of Ibsen. And inside the low-ceilinged, smoke-filled room a company is seated like a company of men of death, spectral through the tobacco fumes, rumbling like ancient sailors over their wine. On such a night the wineshop of the white-bearded Frédé produces the illusion of a ship faring in a heavy sea. The gloom, the almost unconscious swaying of the company to a melancholy chorus, the rough, bare tables, the shaggy head of old Frédé himself, the faces lost in the shadows, complete the forecastle-like atmosphere. The ship is a phantom ship, compassless and helmless, moored in the dim immensity above Paris, and its crew are the souls of poets who have never been born.

So Francis Carco, the historian of the French apache, a modern Villon delighting in the company of tavern rogues and tipplers, recalls in an entertaining volume, 'De Montmartre au Quartier Latin,' the Lapin Agile of his youth in Bohemia. They were gay, spendthrift days, when misery was the natural en-

vironment and destiny of an artist, and the starved bodies of the colony of poets and painters huddled round Frédé's stove were meagrely nourished on croissants and milk filched from apartment buildings in the early morning. It was 1910, and Guillaume Apollinaire, André Salmon, and André Warnod were indulging their fantastic imaginations on the Butte of Montmartre. Utrillo, that melancholy genius, was painting in his garret and selling pictures to pay for drink. The Cubists had already discovered cubism. Picasso had immortalized himself and scandalized the world with his comment on a piece of Negro sculpture which some disciple had somewhat hesitatingly compared to the Venus of Milo — 'It is far more beautiful.'

The young men living on the hilltops of Montmartre and Montparnasse were excitingly aware of the tropical colour and savage emotion that Gauguin had discovered in Tahiti. Conrad and Jack London — yes, Jack London — had brought the savour and the adventure of life on the hidden seas to these experimental Frenchmen, painting and versifying.

And then one day a tall, dark, cold man, closely wrapped in a sailor's cloak, came into the cabaret. He had an air of mystery. He was, it was whispered, a ship's captain on leave between two long cruises. He said nothing until somebody mentioned, in a tone of ecstasy, the flower-crowned girls that Gauguin had discovered in the South Seas. And then he said

coldly, in a tone that made contradiction impossible: 'It's always raining at Tahiti. The women are dressed in oilcloth.'

Some courageous spirit attempted to bear up under this chilling blast and retorted that in Switzerland there was an alarm clock on the top of each mountain. But the deep-sea sailor was equal to that. 'It is quite possible,' he murmured tranquilly. After which Gauguin was never mentioned in his presence, and the ship's company swayed to a concertina played in the forecastle gloom of the cabaret, with hatches clapped on and all sail bent.

Weeks later, Carco and some of his companions were privileged to visit the captain's apartment in Montmartre. It was a severely nautical lodging and the visitors sat on the floor for lack of chairs and drank their Martinique rum out of the bottle. There were, in place of furniture, several much-worn cabin trunks, a sextant, a telescope, a hammock, a medical chest, and several captain's undress uniforms hanging on a nail. The captain, stamping up and down the hollow-sounding apartment floor as if it were a quarterdeck, regaled them with (on this occasion) satisfyingly colourful stories of sights and marvels on sea and land.

He disappeared several days later, chest and hammock and sextant and all, and was never seen again. And subsequently his guests discovered that he had never seen the sea and was merely a prosperous farmer from Touraine spending in Paris a vacation from reality and overcome with the strange desire to

set sail with his imagination, sharply to cleave the perilous and dreamed-of Southern seas.

That was the Montmartre of the young men of the first decade in this century, between whom and whose survivors the war and the post-war years have erected their fatal barrier. Those young men have grown rich or respectable or they are no more. Montparnasse has since claimed the undivided attention of the artist who would be poor but free. It has lately become a colony of artists who are neither the one nor the other, and its great and gaudy cafés now rival in mechanical brilliance, ostentation, and noise the great brasseries of the Place de Clichy and the Porte Maillot. But for all that it is still a jumping-off place for the youthful genius of the world. Nowhere is life so careless, so irregular, so unbounded by rules and barriers and styles and manners. Nowhere is poverty less a crime or industry less a virtue.

Life is looked down upon there from a mountain of tranquillity whose pillars are the legs of a table on a café terrasse and whose peak is a pile of soucoupes. The broad Boulevard Montparnasse is paved with good intentions, and in places with nothing else. Between the Cabaret of the Jockey, with its file of sporting cars, its Russian bartender, its mining-camp atmosphere and its gold-digging clientèle, and the Escargot, in the rue de la Gaîté, where soupe à l'oignon steams all night, the midnight population of Montparnasse talks all the tongues of Babel from China to Peru. For notwithstanding the title of

Francis Carco's book of wistful recollections, there is no longer a Quartier Latin. The Latins have been driven out by the Nordics, with the Swedes leading by a short head.

Montmartre of the Painters

Montmartre in life, contrary to the evidence of the eyes and to all other report, is not a gay place. Montmartre in art is full of a curious melancholy. It is the middle region, inhabited by the lost. The furious nocturnal mirth of the cabarets around the Place Pigalle and the Place Blanche has died away; the saxophone and the accordion are silent. In the daylight the painted façades of the haunts of pleasure look drab like the booths in Bunyan's Fair. Of all that unreal world of sound and colour, the mad music and the strong wine of youth, nothing remains on the painted canvas but an old village dying on a hill. It has known a century of human follies, and the painters of Montmartre, from Gavarni to Utrillo, all reflect its disillusionment. The gentle satire of the one has given place to the wistful idealism of the other. Both, however, were equally victims of Montmartre's strange attraction, and their works are equally curious for the self-revelation they contain.

The Montmartre that Gavarni drew was almost pastoral. The old village on the heights was not yet incorporated in the city. Cows and goats made a clearer music on the quiet air than the vague and still harmonious murmur rising from the town be-

low. The gray stone cottages and cobbled streets were no less picturesque then than now, if not so ruined. It was the romantic period in France, and young men who were later to put aside folly and become staid burghers, lawyers, doctors, and politicians entered with a wild joy into the illicit pleasures, the undreamed-of liberty, and the unaffected manners of the Butte.

A number of windmills then spread their dark fantastic arms invitingly on the brow of the hill. And it was the miller's jovial custom, inspired perhaps by a tradition initiated by the unhappy Marie Antoinette, to offer cakes and wine and the joys of the dance to all who climbed the steep street. Of the several mills that once indulged in this agreeable and lucrative commerce, the Moulin de la Galette, which still exists, although in a slightly more elegant if more banal form than its humble predecessor, was the most famous. It has inspired several generations of Parisian painters, Corot, Van Gogh, and Toulouse-Lautrec among them, and in their works you can watch the gradual evolution of the old dance hall. It is still the most characteristic Parisian spectacle I know, although the simple filles and urbane gallants of Gavarni have been replaced by a cruder type of client, furtive and sometimes menacing, from the edge of the underworld.

Nevertheless, Montmartre for the world at large was not represented by the Moulin de la Galette, but by another mill turned cabaret — the Moulin Rouge. Almost all the Montmartre painters haunted

this place, not merely as observers and historians of the strange and glittering spectacle, but often as players in a drama that was the drama of their own lives. The stunted figure of Toulouse-Lautrec, seated eternally at his table in the gardens, morose and cynical, hiding with difficulty a secret rage at his own physical infirmities; Georges Bottini, the brilliant and handsome son of a barber in the rue Fontaine, condemned to die prematurely and in a madhouse; Steinlen, dead in poverty and disillusionment among his cats; Depaquit, the eccentric jovial mayor of the self-styled Free Commune of Montmartre, and even Willette, who survived them all until recently — they were themselves figurants in the frieze of bright vanities that they loved to contemplate.

The old Moulin Rouge was burned down just before the war, and the combined variety theatre and dance hall that bears its name was built on a neighbouring site. The dance hall of the Moulin Rouge, like the Bal Tabarin, another celebrated haunt, still preserves that curious ballet number called the French cancan. The six girls of the ballet retain the complicated frilly skirts of their predecessors, who dazzled the eyes of goggling provincials and callow youths long since lying in Père Lachaise, but nowadays they go flippantly and mechanically through movements meant to be danced with a slow and voluptuous precision.

The graceful number seems ridiculously old-fashioned now, squeezed with a characteristic French

conservatism between the loud and cumbrous French Boston and the louder jazz. But I never see it without a return of something of the old nostalgia of Montmartre. The indifferent whiteness of the skirts of the ballet looks dazzling enough under the hot glare of the spotlight. The large old-fashioned French band, all brasses and strings, strikes up the music with a sudden blare. The girls are quickly metamorphosed into curves of light and colour. The large hot background is like a glittering screen, all velvety with soft fire and dimmed lights, all aswoon with the immense emotion of the silent audience. On the illumined floor alone is the sparkle and movement of life. And if one turns one's back to the magical scene one can see reflected in the vast silent mirror on one side of the hall the heart-moving spectacle that Renoir and Manet, Bottini and Toulouse-Lautrec, Willette and Steinlen saw — the spectacle of their dark, mirrored selves, contemplating with a bitter emotion their secret heart's desire.

VI

PARIS OF THE REVOLUTION

The Feast of the Bastille

The makers of history are not always highly respectable. The event which history acclaims as the beginning of the French Revolution was viewed with horror by many, with apprehension by more, and with approbation by but a few. It is doubtful if any of the public champions of the people, on that hot and sanguinary Fourteenth of July in the First Year of the Republic One and Indivisible, took part in the short and successful onslaught on the Bastille. That formidable prison, fortress as well as jail, fell to commoner hands. The grim scene is well portrayed in the yellowing woodcuts in the Musée Carnavalet, but the old engraver was too engrossed with his subject to heed the background of his picture, the dark and toppling houses of the marshes, the hot glints of the light on the river, which then reflected, but never more, the blunt ugly towers of the King's prison.

There had been significant rumblings all day in that congested quarter. The little shops in the Temple, ancient labyrinth of petty trades, were full of sullen men and chattering women. The revolt, when it came, burst like a thunderclap from a dark and angry sky. Who conceived the staggering idea of marching on the Bastille, so simple and so audacious, neither

history nor legend relates. But the idea spread like fire in dry grass, and out of narrow streets, across the river bridges, came men with pikes, men with old muskets, men with paving stones and cruder weapons yet, to rush in a torrent of flesh against a fortress of iron and stone.

No victory of the human idea of liberty had wider fame. The fall of the Bastille, whatever its results and however wide and red the river of blood which flowed in France under the Terror, was a symbol that no man could forget. The old philosopher Kant, hearing the tremendous news at Koenigsberg, trembled a little in joy and apprehension for the old order that was destroyed, and for the new order that was born. And in that wide and high Place de la Bastille, empty save for its column and for the green buses that rattle across the cobbled space, I never walk without feeling the aptness of this emptiness in which the gloomy prison stood, a dungeon where now is the mild sky and the ambient Paris air.

On the Fourteenth of July my feet are moved by secret instincts first to the Place de la Bastille and then to the Palais Royal. There is a little white-painted restaurant on the edge of the Palais Royal kept by a white-faced man full of the dark, bitter humour of the neurasthenic. Between the succulent dishes which he cooks for you with apparent reluctance, he lifts occasionally an edge of the heavy veil that history has hung over all this strange quarter, so full of narrow streets and old houses and dark passages generous to rascals hard pressed by

the watch. From his wine-cellar a secret passage ran, and still runs, to the apartments that the great Cardinal built for himself in the palace. It was used by the men who spied upon his enemies. It was probably used, too, by the men who spied upon himself. Traitors and servitors, courtiers and courtisanes crept through the tunnel under the walls of the palace. And after them, too, the men of Desmoulins, the young and ardent Camille, lover and orator, first rhetorician of the Revolution, a poet writing his soul in action.

There in the Palais Royal sat Danton, the Aristide Briand of his age. The crowd pressed round the tables where he sat among his friends, a brusque, hard-drinking man, free of word and act, a sturdy, boisterous lion of the people. The cafés, even the tables, are there now, stained with age, brown with the bronze tint of wood darkened by smoke and the companionship of living things. There are two trees in the garden, bent and gnarled torsos of gladiators laurelled in green, that are beautiful like antique statues. They, too, in their secular age, have their part among the relics of Revolutionary Paris.

Even amid the sanguinary tumult of that day, I like to think, a straining ear could catch from the Palais Royal the roar of the crowd assaulting the Bastille. The rue de Rivoli was taut with alarm and watchfulness. Across the river men marched by devious ways, bringing small arms looted from the King's arsenal. The bridges of the Seine were held by the royal guards, but trembling citizens brought

powder and matchlocks in small boats over the water. In the face of that fortress the Parisians were as disarmed as if with bodkins. Nevertheless, the Bastille fell, and the noise of its fall echoes in the world yet.

Of all the feasts of dancing, there is none like the commemoration of the fall of the Bastille. From the eve the gay flags hang from windows and pillars. A noise of hammering has been heard for days, and now at last appear the wooden booths on which time-honoured orchestras will play the old dances, Java and Boston, waltz and polka, and even, with a certain hesitation, the conquering jazz. In all the great squares and in all the little carrefours, from the Place de la République to the rue Mouffetard, the crazy old fiddlers, trembling with wine and heat and the annual excitement of the fête, old men trembling but bewitched, sob into trumpets and weep over strings, enthroned in their comic booths like prestidigitators at a fair. The bridges of the Seine are festooned in light; rockets and candles soar in spluttering arcs from every bridge over the river and sink at last into a river of fire. All the old bands come out from their year-old retreat, cafés are open all night, and their terraces have unaccountably spread far into the street. And in all the squares — the Place de la Bourse and the Place de la République and the Place de la Bastille, all the squares from Passy to Père Lachaise — moving in dense masses and with unaccustomed freedom in places normally the unchallenged

territory of bus and taxi, the people have once again come out into the street.

The troops of the garrison, to compensate them for the heat and fatigue of the early morning review, have had an extra ration of red wine. A yearly allocation in the city's budget sees to that. The fountains of Paris, unaccountably silent throughout the year except on Sundays and holidays, throw their white folly into the heated air. A team of young men and women swim down the Seine. The public buildings are illuminated at nightfall with those innumerable gas jets that are an inseparable memory of Paris of the nineties, gas that fell in soft yellow rays upon those contours and costumes now so absurd, then so ravishing. And seen from the heights of Montmartre, from the steps of the great white basilica of the Sacré Cœur, whose cloudy domes soar faintly into the night sky, the Paris that Henri Quatre found well worthy of a mass realizes at last that dream of the Haussmann architects, La Ville Lumière, the City of Light.

It is only now, in fact, in high midsummer, that Paris takes on that garment of unreality which shines in all the painters' visions of her, however inadequate. Spring in Paris is a light intoxication, producing the illusion of a green country with rivers. But under the heat of summer the sky becomes a steady pearly mist, hanging low over the domes and spires of the city. The trees of the Champs-Élysées, of the Place du Théâtre Français, of the quiet quays, of all the gardens and cemeteries, fill the town with a heavy verdure and a cool shade. The white stone

bridges seem moored in immateriality, their pillars submerged like the feet of cattle in a low meadow of green or gray light. Their firm arch over the water, so still that it sends back to the sky its own calm immobility, is like a chord of music. All noises are muffled under a light mist of heated air. Only the gay red taxi seems to be abroad and moving, in a host of other gay and moving things, through a world curiously still. The women sit at their brightly coloured news-stands like priestesses before a shrine. A flood of strange new people move stealthily along the boulevards, eyeing the novel city with the bewildered stare of the tourist, or with the gay rapture, insolent and bright and metallic in its gaiety, of the very young. And, heedless of them all, the proud metropolis, the city of the Revolution and the Bastille, of the Terror and of three Republics, pursues its logical destiny, cherishing its memories and rejoicing, with wine and song and dancing until morning, in its liberties hard won.

The Month of Madness

The little theatres of Paris are like the little restaurants of Paris — the fare offered is simpler and better. Plain living and high thinking are not the worst of companions, if you call an omelette au lard plain. Lucullus himself did eat occasionally of tripes, although not, unfortunately for him, tripes à la mode de Caën, and a diet of stuffed snails and woodcock and pâté de foie gras au porto will eventually drive the most courageous gourmand back to the quiet

streets where the little restaurants linger, like pools on a shore, full of queer fish and sea spoil, the wreckage of the gastronomic sea.

A little restaurant should have at the most one waiter, and only one cook — the patron. A little theatre should have one author and one producer. If the producer be Pitoeff, as for Lenormand's strange, provoking play, 'Mixture,' one is legion. But never let Pitoeff get on the stage after the curtain rises! His wife, the incomparable Ludmilla Pitoeff, can do all the acting one family needs. And if the author be Lenormand or René Fauchois or Jacques Deval — all three born writers, like Pirandello, for the small stage — then all sails are set and the wind is rising.

At the little theatre of the Comédie Caumartin, where René Fauchois first presented his Talking Monkey to a diverted world, the playbills were last year full of a word that was in all men's mouths when the French Republic was young, a word from the crazy philosophic calendar of the French Revolutionaries — Ventôse, the month of March hares, the month of madness.

There is nothing in the contemporary drama in England to recall the Civil War and the English Revolution. And the English Parliament would be either shocked or bored if a new member ventured to recall incidents in the early history of the loyal Commons. The French, however, have a long memory and a delight in history. The great French Revolution is to some Frenchmen as though it were yesterday. At

the suggestion that Thermidor has begun in Russia, old Frenchmen snuff the air knowingly, as if they feel already, in the searching wind from Moscow, the familiar historic signs of the end of a Revolution and the beginning of a régime. And here, by a curious coincidence, is a brilliant little French play about the Revolution of Paris. Not the last, but the next. And not the end, but the beginning. It is aptly named 'Ventôse,' the blustering month, the month of the Ides of March.

'Ventôse,' written by Jacques Deval, describes the story of Revolution breaking upon the Paris of to-day, the hectic Paris of beauty parlours and couturiers and race-meetings and political scandal and fortunes out of mass production. The curtain of the first act rises, in fact, upon the salon of a fashionable coiffeur. One of the sleek assistants is a Communist, and in his idle moments he reads 'L'Humanité' defiantly under the disapproving eye of the patron. He is a handsome and romantic young man, and he spurns the lavish tip of a fair client. And when, in a somewhat improbable scene, the cynical, hoydenish daughter of a multi-millionaire automobile manufacturer treats him with unpardonable insolence, he privately swears to be revenged — and treasures the stub of the cigarette with which the disdainful hussy has burned his hand.

Act II brings vengeance. Upon the dull, after-dinner ennui of the multi-millionaire's mansion near

the Bois de Boulogne bursts a white-faced woman with terrible news. The Communist Revolution has broken out, and the mob is pillaging the shops. The telephone wire has been cut, but realistic noises off stage inform the terrified bourgeois in the millionaire's salon that Ventôse, the terrible month, has begun. The millionaire's wireless describes to them — ironically enough from the mouth of an announcer in Berlin — the progress of the Revolution of Paris. The Socialist Government of the day has fallen, and Léon Blum, the War Minister, and Pierre Renaudel, the Foreign Minister, are in flight. A provisional Communist Government has been set up — machine gun fire, windows crashing, hoarse mob noises cleverly imitated, off.

Into the rich man's mansion, now become the scene of a terror so real as to be shared by a part of the audience, burst the coiffeur's assistant, Maurice, and two companions. While the companions, on Maurice's orders, drive the hoyden's parents down into the cellar, Maurice intimates to Christiane that she is to become his special prey, and with a rather ill-achieved flourish he forces her to light for him the treasured stub of a sadistic cigarette. But left alone with her, the romantic young revolutionary falls immediately victim to Christiane's charms. Aware of her renewed ascendancy, the capricious but not really vicious young woman orders him to accompany her through Paris in order that she may see how a revolution affects a city.

After the mixture of improbable satire and real drama of this act, the third act, of course, is mere anticlimax. The red dawn is only a false dawn. The revolution ends in a cavalry charge. The Government returns and reëstablishes order, and the sentimental revolutionary, a feebler and less cynical Bernard Shaw hero, is aided by Christiane's forgiving parents to flee the country. The rest of the play is merely the unwinding of certain familiar springs of humour. The millionaire's cook, who in the revolutionary second act had denounced her patrons and confiscated some of her employer's silver, is restored to grace because she is a good cook and economical, and a very good reason, too. The footman, after being rebuked for smoking in the salon, resumes his duties. After which life in this bourgeois establishment, like a lake upon which a wind of terror has blown for a while, is placid, dull, and uneventful as before. Here, at least, the wind of Ventôse has not been sown to reap the whirlwind of Thermidor.

Under the Terror

The Latin genius for exposition was never shown to better advantage than in the Exposition of the French Revolution, opened in Paris in 1927. Housed above the National Library in the old Palais Mazarin, in that quarter of the Cardinals which has seen not a little and made not a little of the tremendous history of the town, the show has known the sudden vogue that the Parisians, always capricious and illogical in their fancy, not infrequently give to such a subject.

Not the least remarkable feature of the exposition is the quality of the crowd flocking to it. These faces, bent eagerly over old colour-prints in a glass case, or gravely surveying a bronze bust against the wall — they are surely not the descendants of the victors of that struggle, now one hundred and fifty years old! These proud lineaments, familiar enough against the aristocratic background of the Faubourg Saint-Germain, can claim no kinship with the violent men declaiming in the National Convention, or denouncing treason in the clubs of the Jacobins. But among the aristocrats borne to the guillotine in the shaking tumbrils, borne through these very streets that border the old palace in which the exposition is held, between the high, narrow brown houses with their semi-circular entresol windows, from which the tradesmen and their women gazed with a growing consternation, these modern spectators of an old tragedy had doubtless their kin.

How full of the sublime banality of royal lives is that entry in Louis XVI's diary — 'Tuesday, July 14, 1789: Nothing'; although on that tremendous day the Bastille fell with a great noise that could be heard even in this quarter of the Cardinals, a very crowded, popular quarter, then, as now, full of little crafts, steaming eating-houses and greasy fortune-tellers, and theatrical folk come from playing in Molière's Playhouse not far away and on their way to the gambling-houses in the Palais Royal, and occasionally a great, rude cattle drover, with his pockets full of

gold louis, come in from the markets to see the sights of the town.

At the doorway to the exposition is the stern admonition: 'Here take pride in the title of Citizen!' And, in truth, citoyen is an easier, handier appellation than monsieur, with its ignoble degradation at the hands of tourists and its ludicrous suggestion of a little man with a black imperial, a large black tie, and a stovepipe hat. And how touching, with all the first pride of that youthful republicanism, in its triumphant Year One of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, are these posters, hand-printed and from beautiful types, announcing the first victories of the Republic's armies! Here on one wall are early maps of the North American Republic. Here is Franklin's correspondence. Here the great red seals of the first treaties signed by the victorious Republic with its neighbours, conquered or submissive. Here the banners of the quarters of Paris.

The painter David's beautiful tribute to his friend Marat, stabbed in his bath, hangs on one wall, its colours fresh as if they had been painted yesterday for the Salon des Indépendants. Yet no modern salon has seen a picture as true and as beautiful as that, so true that it might have served as an exhibit in the trial of Charlotte Corday, and so beautiful that it might have acquitted Charlotte. Near it, in a glass case, is the blood-stained copy of Marat's own newspaper, 'The Friend of the People,' that the dead tribune, like a conscientious editor, was reading when

his fate overtook him. The copy belonged to Anatole France, and that ardent collector, with his certain flair for relics of the great revolution, had ascertained that it was authentic.

In the centre of the exposition is the handsome carved Louis Quinze table on which Robespierre, the Sea-Green Incorruptible, lay at the Hôtel de Ville with his jaw shattered by a bullet, during the night of anguish which came between his fall and his execution. Henri Béraud published not long ago a new version of that inexorable destiny in 'Mon Ami Robespierre.' And here is the warrant for the arrest of Danton, signed firmly by Robespierre and falteringly by Maximilian's friend, the elegant and eloquent Saint-Just, orator of the Convention. Here, finally, Bonaparte's own draft of the Treaty of Campo Formio, as vivid and imperious as a message from Mussolini six generations later.

But for the terror and triumph of the Revolution, the human story, to use the language of the newspaper, the hide-and-seek of pity and despair in these old dark Parisian streets, one had to look not in the exposition itself, but across the swirling river at the Odéon, a playhouse of the people. There Gémier, who is probably the first all-around artist and creator of the theatre in France, recently played a revolutionary character in Romain Rolland's superb play of the revolution, 'Le Jeu de l'Amour et de la Mort.' It shows France under the Terror. The death carts are rumbling outside the quiet salon of an old scientist,

Courvoisier (a character founded, evidently, on Lavoisier), and his young wife. A young Girondin risks discovery, betrayal, and the guillotine to declare his love for the wife, and the old man finds them together. A friend of the house, the great Carnot himself, comes to warn the old man that he is himself suspected by the Convention as an indulgent, and that his refusal to sign the warrant for the arrest of Danton has made his own arrest, sooner or later, inevitable. Carnot brings two safe-conducts to the Swiss frontier, one for the old scientist and the other for his wife. The disillusioned philosopher, resigned to death, and aware of the love between the Girondin and his wife, offers his own passport to the young man. The Girondin, whose courage has been worn thin by constant exposure, weakens, takes his chance of safety, and flees. And then the young wife, in a gesture full of pity and nobility, throws her chance of deliverance into the fire and remains with her husband to await the dark messengers. Nothing so fine has been shown on the French stage for years.

VII

PARISIAN PAINTERS AND WRITERS

The Legend of Utrillo

THREE haunting names in the archives of Bohemia have not ceased to fascinate the curious, the morbid, or the romantic — Villon, Verlaine, Utrillo. They are the three disgraces. Melancholy companions of the bowl, their singular destinies are cast in an equal mould. The dark cloud that partly obscured, partly threw into tremendous relief, the genius of Poe hovers over their disreputable heads. If Villon was the dissolute stepfather of poetry, Utrillo was the neglected stepchild, the orphan, at once a prodigy and a waif, of painting. Between both vagabonds of the dark street, separated by seven centuries but by no barrier of the spirit, the delicate, dreamlike shadow of Verlaine intrudes, the very wraith of a wraith.

Only in Paris could the legend of Utrillo have begun, been perpetuated, taken form and semblance, and grown into a myth of such monstrous dimensions. Not in London, not in Berlin, New York, or San Francisco could the frenzied painting of a derelict alcoholic have experienced the sudden but not ephemeral success of the works of the vagrant of Montmartre. The vogue of Utrillo has cast its own spell over the painters of Paris. Not a few of the self-exiled artists of two continents labour here in the vain hope of capturing some of the same curious interest

that dealers and public show in Utrillo. Not a few have been drinking picturesquely for years in order that they may end, like Utrillo, the idol of the public and the lion of the biographers.

Utrillo is the first painter to make a drunkard's vision important. His strange, flat, unearthly landscapes, adventures into the crazy country of the dipsomaniac, seem actually to have elbowed out the Corots and Poussins of an older school. His is the painting of a man who can neither read nor write. It is a crude literature spread on canvas with a brush dipped in wine and gall. The Butte of Montmartre, scene of all the misery, torment, and rare ecstasies of his life; the wan suburbs of Ivry, Levallois, the dirty gray town of Sannois, became the spectral background of a melancholy and lonely soul's struggle with the dark angels.

The bitter irony of life went never farther than in those feverish days, hardly more than five years ago, when the ragged, intense, incoherent man daubed his hasty canvases (which were often mere sheets of cardboard) in exchange for a bottle of cheap red wine or enough apéritifs to send him reeling into the narrow, treacherous Montmartre streets. The crafty wineshop proprietors of those days have since realized handsomely on their prescience. The walls on which Maurice Utrillo's curious but then generally despised daubs were hung, or even nailed, have now surrendered their rich harvest to the galleries and salesrooms of Paris. Frenchmen and Greeks and Ar-

menians have been known to abandon the Bourse to speculate in Utrillos. A typical view of the Moulin de la Galette bought to-day is worth twice as much in six months. No speculators' boom on the Bourse was more spectacular, unexpected, or unreal.

He was a part of all that dreaming, poverty-stricken, eccentric youth that somehow flourished in the old decayed village on the hilltop of Montmartre before the war. In a generation of hard-drinking Bohemians, half artist, half vagabond, half anarchist, half apache, the lean, unhappy figure of Utrillo was the most desperately poor, the most abominably abandoned, the butt of his enemies and the despair of his friends. The Utrillos of that period are the most remarkable documents of the profound, unthinking misery of a human soul. All the bleak loneliness of the decaying quarter of the Bohemians, the bare, unhappy trees, the greenish, mouldering walls, the houses unkempt with age and decrepitude, the curious suggestion of sordid vice and despicable crime create in his flat pictures of Montmartre an almost intolerable sensation of the painter's physical and spiritual morbidity.

That small and maddening meticulousness of his, the crazy lettering on café and inn signs which he copies with such evident satisfaction in his illiterate, schoolboy hand — even the large, contented signature, like that on a peasant's deed of sale — complete the spectator's slightly creepy feeling of looking through a crack in the wall of an insane asylum. So

much reproduced unhappiness is not normal. In all the large visible world, cloudy or bright, still or tempestuous, there is a healthy orderliness in emotion and colour. Those grayish whites are not so green in life. Those walls in Utrillo's terrifying banlieue of Paris are gray and dirty enough in the suburbs, but not so morbidly discoloured. A damp discoloration, in effect, is typical of all Utrillo's work, not merely of the present state of his colours, so hurriedly put on, so ill chosen, but also of the spiritual quality of his paintings. It is as if the whites of his eyes were full of dull, greenish spots.

And yet, and yet — what is the curious, absorbing quality of Utrillo? His recent work is too new, too flat, too elegant in its reformed child's manner to attract anything but a speculator's attention. In a few years, when its whites have become dimmed as in the earlier pictures, taking on a discoloration that is almost a spiritual dimension, the modern work will be possibly cherished. Or possibly forgotten.

The early pictures, the daubs of his period of complete physical degradation, have an emotional appeal which painters recognize but affect to deplore and which writers invariably and naturally admire. No cathedral in history has ever been painted in such a way that it produces upon the beholder the sensation of physical and mental grief created by Utrillo's picture of Reims under shell-fire. The flames burst from it like blood from bodily wounds. The carved saints on the façade of the cathedral seem to be alive

and moving in dumb agony. The anguish of the artist, the sombre, incoherent Utrillo sunken in his dark alcoholic abyss, is materialized in the inexorable, greedy flames that devour the work of beauty. He saw in this conflagration, perhaps, the epitome of his own dark life, a prey devoured alternately by oblivion and despair.

The Women of the Parisian Painters

'I am young and I love women,' proclaimed recently Mr. Michael Arlen, who owes not a little of his considerable success to this amiable preoccupation. Probably the secret of all success, or of all failure, lies in that frank attitude. The world is becoming increasingly a woman's world. Literature is more and more a symposium, not of men's views about men's treatment of women, as in the romantic Victorian age, but of women's views about woman's treatment of man. Even in France, where the triumph of women has always been admitted, even in the world of politics, and to such a degree that it has been unnecessary for women to seize the final and purely nominal privilege of suffrage, the attitude between the sexes has changed. There is no longer that frank surrender of masculine reason and will, that delirious romantic yielding of strength to weakness clad in silken armour. The sublime mistress of the nineteenth century, the half sorceress of Baudelaire's haunted vision, has become the calm comrade of the twentieth. Her wide eyes look out unconcernedly on the havoc of the flesh, where the unfathomable deeps

of her predecessor, lying snakily among dark satins, concealed a pitiless, a provocative disdain.

Something in woman has changed to produce this strange phenomenon: that while the painters of the women of the last century were self-revealed as the slaves of their hopeless and often humiliating passions, the painters of the twentieth century are slaves to nothing but an intolerable realism. Not even the Dutchman Van Dongen, who strives to be a subtly distorting mirror to the post-war Parisienne, can conceal beneath his charming and occasionally brilliant studies of the celebrated figures in Parisian society a cold satire that is almost Hogarthian. Between him and Toulouse-Lautrec, the painter of the hard and sensual women who were the idols of Paris in the nineties, there is a gulf beyond that of the flesh.

Even for his cruel and unforgettable taskmistress, 'La Goulue,' an incarnation of triumphant desires and avarice, the humiliated painter of Montmartre and its cabarets felt profoundly some strange and chivalrous pity. The weaker vessel, full as she was of rancours and unpitying and implacable desires, was still to Toulouse-Lautrec, caught in his strange enchantment like Tolstoy's character among the gipsies, not merely a fleshly ideal. Frail vehicle of overmastering passions, she was nevertheless to him, if to none else of her generation, a strayed and lost Madonna of the Florentines.

Renoir has something of that passion for women, although betrayed more delicately, with infinitely

less self-revelation. That portrait of his of a woman in white, with her red-gold hair glistening under the green trees, with her satisfied, half-virginal and half sensual profile hardly more than indicated — can you behold it without sharing something of that shy adolescent wonder of the artist at the golden glow of white flesh in the spring sunlight? And the Parisian woman of Manet — neatly gowned in black, with a high collar and a half veil, disclosing small, bright features and sparkling eyes — women such as his demure reader of an illustrated newspaper, the ideal of coquetry?

From Manet back to Ingres — to the Ingres who leads the century of portraits of Parisian women recently exposed in Mme. Lapauze's brilliant collection at the Renaissance gallery in the rue Royale — three quarters of a century recede in retrospect. The false Romantics, like the German Winterhalter, with his sparkling court portraits of the Second Empire, still brilliant and moving like the Van Dycks of an earlier period, are leaped over and forgotten in the intervening gulf. The women of Ingres were the first of the famous Parisian types — those women with their oval, heavy-lidded faces and rounded forms, the still, staring women whose figures filled the annual salons from 1840 to the present day, to the dismay of tourists and the despair of artists.

From the Montmartre painters, with their fleshly models and their bewildered senses, was but a stage to the cloudy mysticism of Fantin-Latour. The evo-

lution of the Parisian woman was not, however, allowed to stop there. Corot, for all his experience as a Parisian and a Montmartrois, contributed little to the painter's record of women. In most of his portraits they are but the foreground to a landscape in which the famous Corot gray, significant like a spiritual quality, suffused some woodland scene.

But how different from all their women is the woman of the twentieth-century painters! Alone among the moderns shown in this remarkable collection the Japanese artist, Foujita, in his portrait of Mme. Philippe Berthelot, which is really a study of a Parisian interior, pays that deferential and almost idolatrous attention to a beautiful woman which was characteristic of the painters of the middle of last century. Van Dongen's study of a woman in black is a study in satire. The Gauguins are studies in the morbid pathology of the artist. The portrait by Othon-Friesz is a portrait very characteristic of over-Germanized modern European art. The Picassos, meant by the organizer of the exposition to represent the last word in the modern paintings of women, reveal less than the Friesz of this new attitude to a new type. Poor, brilliant Modigliani, dead of alcohol and poverty and the diseases of poverty, in a bare studio in Montparnasse, alone of all the moderns shown here paints women as a mysterious projection of himself, the product of a fifth rib, captured, but never mastered; looking out upon their creator from the dark canvas with indifferent, unfaithful eyes.

Manet, Mallarme, and Moore

Manet, Mallarmé, and Moore

Paris, like Venice, is a painter's city. Its everlasting background is like one of those strange landscapes that Da Vinci saw as the witness to the Jocund Lady's smile — the lazy Seine, the dark hull of Notre Dame, the fretted, leafy screen of the tree-lined quays, the towers and domes, the crazy roof-line of old Paris squatting over its many bridges. Etchers spend their lives in Paris, suspended like souls between heaven and hell, moving in their imponderable dreamlike world of line and shadow. But more alluring even, and more elusive than the city itself, is the life of the city. Many great painters, almost all the great painters of the last generation, have fallen under its spell, never to escape. Claude Monet alone, perhaps, shook himself from its coils, to nurse his wistful dream of colour and light among the water-lilies of his garden at Giverny. But the other giants of his generation were all supremely painters of Paris life; the life of the streets, of the cafés, of the political salon, of the theatre, of the alcove. Yet of them all, and they are astonishingly few, none was more Parisian, more passionately interested in his town and in his period than Manet.

He went no farther for his models than the Tuileries, the racecourse at Longchamp, a café table under the trees in spring, a guinguette at Meudon or Saint-Cloud, the coulisses of a music hall, the Bohemian apartments of his friends. From the mellow canvases and soft colours of an exposition of Manets in Paris, a ghost-like generation emerges. It was the gen-

eration of the Yellow Decade that preceded the Mauve Decade. The brooding face of Mallarmé looks out from a wall of painted silk, with his fierce, melancholy eyes and delicate brow, charged with a burden too heavy for a single intelligence to bear. The solid, valiant figure of Zola is also there — Zola in his prime, after the terrible years of the 'Débâcle' and before the hardly less terrible years of 'J'Accuse.'

The fine profile of the great pamphleteer Henri Rochefort, the Maximilian Harden of his time, searching and delicate, gleams on another canvas. George Moore is there, a pale and wistful figure, unimaginable as the impenitent hero of the youthful follies of his Confessions. He, too, is a ghost, although a very vigorous, gallant ghost, of that great generation. Berthe Morizot and Eva Gonzalés, tragic, artificial personalities with large haunting eyes, move gracefully in their rustling black satins through the studios of their friends and historians. And from the other walls look down a dozen calm nudes, painted with all Manet's genial candour of the flesh, and a simpering family party on a bright green balcony.

Of his most celebrated pictures only the superb 'Olympia,' which is in the Louvre, and stared at daily by another generation with harsh, cynical eyes, is not shown in this exposition; the 'Olympia,' and the even more famous 'Bon Bock,' which first moved the public to interest in the painter by its resemblance to a Franz Hals, and which is now in America.

Manet, Mallarme, and Moore

Of all that Yellow Decade with its poets and painters, Mallarmé and Catulle Mendés, Dégas and Pissaro, Monet, Renoir, and Manet, not one survives except George Moore, writing long hours every day in his London home and crowding upon paper the exciting memories, still disturbing after forty years, of his life in Paris. André Gide, who has been travelling in Central Africa, is a younger literary survivor from a later epoch. He and Moore, both painted by a younger Manet, Jacques Blanche, whose works occupy a wing of the admirable Musée des Beaux Arts in Rouen, share with their dead friend Mallarmé that indefinable air of having survived their time, of living on in a newer and less exciting world, looking a trifle scornfully out from a crowded past, and nourished in disillusion only by memories.

But I had forgotten another impenitent ghost of that generation — Frank Harris. In his most notable literary period Frank Harris lived in London, but at one time or another he knew all the French artists and men of letters of the eighties and nineties. He recently engaged in one of those violent controversies which occasionally disturb and delight the literary world of Paris — a dispute between André Maurois and Henri Davray regarding accusations of plagiarism.

When Frank Harris last saw Oscar Wilde, in the early years of this century, the dying embers of Bohemianism still burned dully in Paris. There were still in existence a number of famous cafés which had

been, and were still, the centre of the literary and artistic life of Europe. Duelling was still fashionable, and not, as now, merely tolerated. It was also dangerous, and not, as now, merely a valiant excuse for mutual apologies. The trees on the boulevards were green, and not the famished things they now are. There were neither advertisement posters nor illuminated signs to make the day hectic or the night hideous between the Étoile and the Bastille.

When one walked of a spring morning down the broad avenue of the Champs-Élysées, one realized that the Elysian Fields were really a green hill, and no one threatened, as now, to replace the magnificent chestnut trees, with their glorious lighted candelabra, by the more banal if more vigorous plane. No automobile salesrooms had yet appeared. The automobile itself was still a curious and slightly offensive contrivance, puffing smoke and noise. High-stepping, high-polished horses sped by, drawing silent-wheeled barouches. The broad avenue, most beautiful of all the beautiful streets in the world, was full of flounces and flowers, proud men and women and proud horses, proud white houses, and a great proud arch on the summit of the hill, through which the evening sun poured in a torrent of gold. Part of that great spectacle still remains, in spite of the sky signs. But we shall never see the Champs-Élysées as Manet and Mallarmé saw it, as George Moore saw it, with the eager, impertinent eyes of a young man in love with himself, in love with life, and in love with Paris.

Jean Richepin

Jean Richepin

Jean Richepin represented, in a special and peculiar fashion, the old, generous France of the end of last century, the prolongation of the great literary generation of France which has not died with Verlaine and was not ended with the old age, the reminiscences, the decay of the genius of Anatole France himself. He re-created, in his songs of the humble, the immortal Villon. He was the troubadour, the minstrel, the passionate singer of a day which felt itself to be, and actually was, farther in spirit from the Middle Ages than to-day is from the China of the Ming dynasty.

Richepin had shared with Verlaine the adventures and the illusions of youth. They had been comrades together, although not of the same age, in the shabby discursive poets' clubs of the Latin Quarter — that of the Hydropaths among others. Years later, when Verlaine had long lain in his grave, and Richepin was a famous Academician, the splendid survivor, with his handsome Greek head and crisp, white curls, would recite the verses of his dead friend until, at the evocation of that sad genius, idle talk ceased and men with idolatry in their souls leaned eagerly forward into the dim, smoke-filled Parisian night.

His bones, built for a hero, lie in the valley of André-Pléneuf, feet toward the broad Atlantic. The sea-wind sweeps over his grave, the wind of that sea which surges like a chorus through all his work. Tramps and beggars feel its salt breath upon their

brow, sailors and fishermen feel it as the blood in their veins and the marrow in their bones. Richepin lies at last by the sea, that waste of waters of which he wrote:

> Quiet,
> And a wind that brings
> Sleepy sea music on its wings . . .

They sang a mass over him at the little Church of Notre Dame de Grâce, in Passy, which in some parts is still a village, although well within the confines of Paris. To his graveside — the chronicler and minstrel of the beggars, the hoboes, the wharf rats, the old labourers, the soldier broken in alien wars — the Government and the learned societies sent their official mourners. Old men from the Academy in green coat and sword — the only sword in Europe that has not been threatened with transformation into a pen — read speeches on the chapel steps in a cold, searching wind, and they, too, will not be long in this world.

Édouard Herriot, then Minister of Education, and a man who knows the humanities better than he knows his fellowman, which is fatal in a politician, made over the coffin a speech that few men could listen to, knowing their Richepin, without tears.

'It was,' he said to the unhearing dead, 'the soul of France that sang in you. On her soil you met the suffering and the humble — your heroes. You saw the wayfaring man, the old cripple begging in the

rain, the children crying in the mud, the ploughman leaning in weariness upon the handles of his plough. There you heard the ballad of the blackcap, la romance de la fauvette à la tête noire.'

Until his last days Richepin loved to frequent a certain famous music-hall off the Paris boulevards. He had his day, and on the same day of every week he was to be found in the same box. The singers and the acrobats played to him especially, and after the performance he usually drank a glass of champagne with them behind the scenes. And he would say, shaking his splendid old head: 'Now, of course, I am too old to change, but all the poetry of to-morrow is perhaps to be found in vaudeville.'

This essentially Latin poet was a characteristic Frenchman, with all his pagan air and Greek passion. His muse and his music were Mediterranean, and his alien ear found English a hard and unmusical language. When English friends discussed literature with him, he would pretend that there were no great writers in their language, and that the great Shakespeare himself was really a Frenchman whose name, Jacques-Pierre, had been badly battered by the islanders.

The fire and the passion of the poet of the 'Chanson des Gueux,' of the 'Chemineau,' of the sea poems, and of the 'Blasphèmes' and 'Caresses' waned with age and respectability. The Academy exacted some price in return for its olive-green coat and toy sword. And this generation of Frenchmen has almost for-

gotten that Richepin was once the banned and at one time actually prosecuted singer of the pariahs and the outcasts of a former generation.

And now the old sea-wolf is dead. The last spark of a great fire kindled by the poets of the last century is extinguished. The forehead with its crisp Greek curls, that a trembling old confrère in the Academy, René Doumic, kissed in the death chamber in the Villa Guilbert, lies under six feet of Breton earth. And only a couple of white-headed fellow-poets, Paul Fort and Raoul Ponchon, who blindly followed a friend's ashes to the graveside, remain to this generation of Europeans to testify to the passions and the follies of last century's youth.

Anatole France — His Friends and his Biographers

A man in a green hat, wearing a French Academician's tin sword, not long ago explained to an audience composed chiefly of four generals, a minister, a papal dignitary, several curators of provincial museums, numerous biographers, and nameless versifiers still plodding over the fields of asphodel in the footsteps of the late Racine, his disrespect for the literary achievements of his predecessor in the French Academy, a man called Anatole France. By this sensational admission he roused the enthusiasm of the waist-lined but not yet head-lined dilettanti of the Bœuf sur le Toit and gave fresh vigour to the chorus of denigration that arose from the younger school of French writers almost before France's corpse had grown cold. They denied his art, they ridiculed his

style, they denounced his adaptations. Men who had hardly learned to read accused him of not having learned to write. Men to whom he had given, in his indulgent bounty, a moment's praise or an occasional employment left his house to exalt themselves and to malign him to posterity. No great man has been worse served by his beneficiaries. No man might have said with greater justice, 'Save me from my friends.'

After having admitted others all his life to his admirable and charming intimacy, France is now more alone, in the cold isolation of the grave, than many who enjoyed not a hundredth of his celebrity. Among his guests there were too many professional biographers, and by them he has been undone. No post-mortem has been more maliciously conducted, has revealed so little that we did not know or suspect, has revealed so much of the malignity of small minds.

He is made to appear a mere drawing-room lion, the hero and the puppet of a designing and brilliant woman's literary salon. His conversation, often retailed since it first sparkled in a corner of Mme. de Caillavet's library, has been reproduced so witlessly that he appears as a bore. His real scholarship, vast and deep, is paraded until it obscures his fundamental humanity. His books are described with a deliberate artlessness that hints at their construction, after infinite pains, out of press clippings, borrowed phrases, and epigrams filched from the classics. His philosophy is dismissed as the changing and insincere

attitude toward life of a tired epicure, who knew not the fervours and candours of Jean Cocteau and Raymond Radiguet and the other young men who created the literary cabaret of the Ox on the Roof. The truth is that many of his contemporaries, as well as many writers of later generations, envied France his enormous success. No writer of his time more influenced or delighted the minds of his compatriots. As one woman wrote to him, in a letter that gave him infinite satisfaction in his last years, his works had given her the first real happiness she had known in a long life full of disillusion and despair.

A singular and even sordid fatality seemed to accompany the last hours of Anatole France, as it has pursued his reputation after death. As his name could not be defended from the dozens of gossiping biographers who brandished their scraps of dialogue or memories of chance meetings, so his treasures, bibelots, his death chamber, his corpse itself, could not be kept free of sacrilegious hands. The house in Touraine in which he lay for weeks between life and death was besieged by the curious and the commercial-minded. In an inn hard by a battalion of newspaper reporters and photographers was encamped. In the house itself a number of France's intimates had established themselves as the garrison of the death-beleaguered city. And while France lay in the chamber above them, comatose and attenuated, his face and hands like old ivory, the fine intelligence obscured and silenced, in the dining-room below long

and exciting conversations were held with the cook and elaborate dinners were served with unremitting French precision. The business of life went on.

One day a large, vital, ruddy-faced surgeon came to the house. He filled the corridors with his booming voice, demanding Anatole France's brain when he was dead. In the interests of science, he roared, the brain of France, like that of Renan, must be weighed and measured, and embalmed for futurity. The executors gave the required permission, as they gave it to an artist to enter the death chamber, and a few days later, to their pious horror, postal cards and photographs of the great writer on his deathbed, of his embalmed and measured brain, were sold on the streets. Indignity could go no farther.

But a touch of human comedy came to relieve the sorry end. When the remains of France were ready for transportation to Paris, where an imposing state funeral awaited them, a dull orgy of purple palls and interminable oratory, the coffin was placed in an enormous motor-hearse. During the journey its sole escort, the driver and his companion, an undertaker's mute, stopped at an obscure wayside inn to refresh themselves at noon. While they ate and drank, exchanging professional reminiscences over the wine-stained tablecloth, the hearse and its immortal burden stood in the barn, to which, with Roman indifference, they had been carelessly consigned. To Michel Corday, the friend and executor of France, this seemed the last act of vulgar sacrilege.

But a friend to whom, full of indignation, he re-

counted the incident, restored him to a philosophic calm. None, he assured him, would better have appreciated the irony, the rich cream of Life's last jest, than the great pagan himself.

A Female Boswell

The familiars of Anatole France were a curious crowd. There was the Bolshevik philosopher Rappoport, incredibly hairy, incredibly gnomelike, with a deep, chuckling laugh that disarmed suspicion. Rappoport sprawled in the long grass of the maître's orchard at La Bêchellerie, browsing like a mastodon upon gigantic leather-bound tomes from the priceless library. There was France's publisher, Gaston Calmann. There was his physician and close friend, Dr. Couchoud. There were, in more recent years, the authors Michel Corday and François Crucy. There were a couple of Deputies who would drop in on the sage of the Villa Said between two fist-fights at the Chamber. There were two former Premiers, Caillaux and Barthou. And finally there was Mme. Boloni, a Hungarian author writing under the less equivocal name of Sandor Kemeri, who has set out to be the Boswell to France's Johnson.

Mme. Boloni descended upon Anatole France from her native Hungary in 1910, when the death of his oldest friend, Mme. de Caillavet, had prostrated him in a lethargy of grief. Mme. Boloni coaxed, flattered, wheedled, encouraged, and finally raised him morally and physically out of this condition.

She accompanied him and his friend Couchoud to Italy, on a last contemplative journey. She admired his books, his bibelots, his Tanagras, his Gothic chimney in the Villa Said, his statue of Aphrodite caressed by the loving, sensitive fingers of Rodin and declared by him to be more beautiful even than the Venus de Milo. She admired his erudition, his wisdom delicately tinged with malice, his generosity, his pity, his great, noble head and hands, his white hair and beard. She admired him so openly and so impulsively that France yielded to the Boswell touch, and thus the book in which this female disciple has described the 'Promenades d'Anatole France' is a faithful and naïve fragment of Boswellian biography.

When France set out, as on a fine spring morning he was wont, on a flânerie across old Paris, it was Mme. Boloni-Boswell who accompanied him. In this part of the book she describes the authentic France, a lazy, contemplative, incredibly informed old man, loving old books and old prints and old history, the obscure youth of time. She allows France to brood over ancient violence in the Passage du Commerce, which he rechristened Passage de la Révolution because of its many relics of the Terror. But not before she has cooked for him, in her apartment overlooking that very heart of old Paris, the Place Dauphine, a marmite full of marrow bones and fragrant with sweet marjoram.

Dying like a giant of mythology on his vast bed in a hotel facing the Tuileries, the white-maned lion

of the North, Björnstjerne Björnson, was embraced by Anatole France. Both men had, almost alone in Europe, been the ardent defenders of Dreyfus. How faint, far off, and long ago seem the battles of those days! Yet there are cafés in Paris to-day, dim, gas-lit cafés over in the Jewish quarter of the Temple, between Belleville and the Bastille, where the name of Dreyfus thrown into an assembly of middle-aged men would raise more argument than the name of Suzanne Lenglen in the bar of the Carlton Hotel at Cannes. Those old feuds die hard.

The Boswell from Budapest records the conversations of Anatole France with creditable zeal and industry. Through her pages he appears as an indefatigable talker, as she appears an indefatigable listener. Neither, fortunately, was quite the case. On one occasion, however, the gentle and faithful Boloni must have listened with both ears. It was that of the meeting of Rodin and Anatole France, two Homeric giants who had been reconciled to each other in the evening of their lives after years of bitter hostility. It was the morrow of the reconciliation, and Rodin was coming to lunch at the Villa Said. France produced of his best to do honour to the great artist. The table was decked with an altar-cloth of Florentine lace, with Bohemian glass, Louis Seize crystal and dishes in majolica, and even (a sure feminine touch this!) with Parma violets. Rodin came in, muscular, vigorous, heavily built like Michael Angelo, and restless with impatience to see the treasures that

France had promised to show him. The Aphrodite, already mentioned, held him entranced. The fragile body of that Greek girl of the days of Phidias had, he declared, the solidity of a cathedral. Before so much beauty the two handsome old men fell into a silent ecstasy of contemplation. Something had gone out of the world since the unknown artist died who created that thing of light and wonder.

Anatole France attempting to eat macaroni in a trattoria in the Via Nazionale of Rome, listening with interest to the conversation between a greedy curé and his housekeeper, and amused at the quarrels between a noisy actress and her jealous lover; Anatole France spurring a slumbering and ignorant attendant in a museum in Florence to a comprehension of created beauty; or chafing at the profane noise of an itinerant orchestra in the street below his hotel window; or buying tattered old books from dealers in Paris merely to mend the broken binding and repair the torn pages, for love of books as books — the shrewd, observing Boswell notes it all. Yet she herself does not appear in any kind of noticeable relief. The Boswell of Johnson was as clear and vivid a personage, is still as clear and vivid, as Micawber, and almost as real, which is saying something. The little Scottish squire and the clumsy, dogmatic, elephant-man of his adoration were the intellectual Mutt and Jeff of their day. Boswell drew the pair as if he were Hogarth, with Hogarth's unflattering pencil but with Boswell's human folly. The lady from Budapest

is still far from rivalling that dapper, frivolous, but immortal genius in portraiture.

The Paris of Balzac

Among the Rodins collected by a Paris art dealer, marbles and bronzes defying classification and defying criticism, wrought out of the heat and torment of genius, nothing more strikes the imagination and haunts the mind than the massive, stupendous nude figure of Balzac. In it Rodin has stripped the mind as he has stripped the body. Flesh and mind are one, like Whitman's, like Michael Angelo's. The powerful challenging carcase is the projection of the powerful challenging intellect. When you have seen it you have seen the torrent of energy that poured out of Balzac's soul. You have understood how feeble an instrument was a mere pen in his vigorous hands, and how impossible the task set the luckless compositor who had to follow his soul's fiery traces over the white page.

The nude Balzac was the nude France. He bared life as for a post-mortem. He dissected its nerves, its veins, its fibre. When you have read a page of Balzac, as a page of Thackeray, you have looked upon the secret life of a period. I remember beginning, a little impatiently, the short story of his (written in the days when a short story was a long story) entitled 'Un Début dans la Vie.' I remember, a little shamefully, thinking that the start in life was very long in starting, and then before I knew it the microscopic

background which Balzac had with infinite pains been building up was part of my own life. I had fallen back into that curious stillness between two great periods in French history when the stones and the trees seem to take on an attitude of expectancy and the air is heavy with the portent of gigantic impending events. In that stillness, as in the lull before an earthquake or an eclipse, the faces and gestures of trifling characters take on a sudden significance. Hostlers and grooms, old women in a coach, a country magistrate, a butter-and-egg man from a growing town, clerks in an attorney's office, move suddenly and stupendously across the hushed landscape. Their faces are twisted and dark, like figures seen in the violet electric light of a magnetic storm. Their grimaces are vibrant with restrained emotion. The small, deliberate detail of the vast picture springs into correlated activity. You are shocked as by the appearance alongside your own of a rival and insignificant universe, a small and leering world careering near you in the void, a world in which this world is mimicked and portrayed, in which, as in a small, cracked hand-glass, you see without recognition your own face.

And so in all essential things the France which Lindbergh did not see (for heroes cannot be tourists) is still the France that Balzac saw. The town of Tours on which his own monument (although not Rodin's) looks down is Tours almost unchanged, the city garlanded with castles, the first stepping-stone to

the white, sun-drenched south. The road that his fiery mail-coach took, bright with paint and rocking dangerously behind its eight fast horses, still goes through Saint-Denis and Pontoise to the Isle Adam. It is speckled here and there with scarlet gasoline stations now and little red and gray houses. But under the heights of Pontoise an inn yard and an inn, the Hôtel de la Poste, show where the horses were changed and man and beast refreshed themselves with wine and water. In the inn dining-room on days when the assize court is in session in the ancient courthouse, the men of the law, round-stomached and smiling, black-portfolioed, talkative, and full of scandal, sit long over their pleasant professional meal, heedless alike of slow justice and breakneck time, and indifferent to the apprehensive regard of farmers and cattle dealers, scowling red-faced and embarrassed across the room.

And Paris, the old Paris of Balzac, before the Prussians came and the neo-Prussian Haussmann, before the great white rays of the Étoile spread in vast new avenues and vast new houses to Passy and Ternes and Champerret and Auteuil, before the boulevards fell under the hammer of the auctioneer and the dynamite of the demolisher, old Paris is still to be recognized by those who seek it. Here and there on a broad white avenue or a narrow gray alley, a high, brown-tiled, dormered roof rises narrow and beautiful between two new roofs of lead or slate. An open porte-cochère lets out the secret of its green court-

yard, its carved stone or forged-iron balustraded staircase, its old grapevine, or spreading tree. A brown-fronted wineshop beckons, the lettering over its door almost illegible with dirt and age. And street after narrow street is filled with the little dark shops of the craftsmen — locksmiths and gravers, bookbinders and goldsmiths, and the master joiner's where lodged, in blue coat and powdered hair, Robespierre himself, the Incorruptible.

In quarter after quarter, east of the Louvre and north of the Panthéon, not a street has changed, not a tile has been moved, not a name that is not staggering under its weight of history. The Court of the Dragon, alas, has recently passed under the hammer, but other antiquities remain outside the museums, free of touch and sight, still warmed by human habit and use and the familiar putting-on of hands. In a cluster of narrow alleys and overhanging eaves near the Hôtel de Ville there are older sights still. Here is the Paris of François Villon. The street where four thieves were hanged still bears its malodorous name. The walls of the high mediæval houses are dank and dark. About them there lurks an air of old melancholy and treason, murder and shameful death.

A Paris Salon

I never climb the broad steps of the Grand Palais and push through the turnstile into one or other of the annual expositions of painting without recalling something of the colour and the flavour of that spring day on which I saw my first Salon. All Paris was

dazzling like a desired fruit ready to be plucked. The river swirled wide and deep and turbulent under its stone bridges after the spring rains. The Pont Alexandre glittered under its gilt like one of the Czar's own domes in the Kremlin. On the leafy quays of the Seine old men and women slumbered on their favourite benches in the anticipatory heat of summer, and young men with a scholarly hesitation fingered the brown-edged prints and the old leather-bound volumes in the book boxes under the trees. The colours of Paris were splashed invitingly on the landscape like pigment generously squeezed from a tube. Under the white dome of Sacré Cœur, half lost in the heat haze, Montmartre sprawled maddeningly, a maze of crooked, cobbled streets, remembered places and titles, incommunicable smells. Over the river the Invalides offered its memories of Napoleon, and the Eiffel Tower towered like a child's meccano Colossus, preposterous, deliciously useless and unreal.

It was afternoon, and the voices of children came faintly across the Champs-Élysées from the proximity of the Guignol under the trees. Gallant old men who had been born under the Second Empire, who had fought in the war of 1870, who had known Gambetta, who had broken lances with Millerand and Jaurès and Viviani in the 'Petite République,' who had fought duels with Clemenceau and eaten dinners chez Voisin with Oscar Wilde, came out of the winter of their days into this spring sunlight, and, walking with feeble dignity down the broad avenue of the Champs-Élysées, wondered at the change in the

Paris of their youth. And on this day, choosing too recklessly between the adventures that Paris offered, I paid my five francs and entered my first Salon.

The last Salon des Indépendants I saw in Paris recalled for a moment something of the ardour of my first thrill. This surely was recklessness with paint. This at last was the breaking-down of the dreadful late-Victorian barrier between painting and humour. An artist could, after all, look at life with some of the average man's humour, cynicism, satisfaction, philosophy, or whimsical eccentricity. A primrose by the river's brim might be to him a primrose or a pot of paint; a streak of spiritual light or a crystal ball with the Dolly Sisters solemnly seated inside it. More often than not, it must be admitted, it was to our bright young man merely a pot of paint, but, at any rate, the terrible Wordsworthian superiority of the artist was broken down. The painter of this generation might be crazy, but at least he would qualify as a Rotarian, as a regular fellow.

But regularity becomes at last as monotonous as the married state, and the Indépendants this year showed deplorable signs of having achieved a sort of laborious method in their madness. At one time in their brief and amusing career they were crazy in a peculiar way: their madness was their own, and nobody would challenge their possession. Now they are just crazy like everybody else. The Cubists are eccentric like the Vorticists, and at the same time. They are both at home, as it were, on the first and

third Wednesdays of the month. The Futurists, who admittedly had no past, now definitely have no future. They have married and settled down. But, unfortunately, they appear to have married the same woman as their confrères in eccentricity, and they, too, are at home on the first and third Wednesdays.

There were, in this Salon, rather more nudes than usual, and most of them seemed to affect the celebrated pose of the Venus in Velasquez's picture in the London National Gallery. There were fewer subjects inspired by the disastrous perusal of modern literature, by circus and by vaudeville. The temporary craze for clowns and dancers seems to have passed. Little remained to be said, in any case, after Manet and Toulouse-Lautrec had said it. There were no portraits in the grand manner, and hardly any portraits worth looking at at all. The French vogue of horn-rimmed spectacles seems to have killed this particular art.

But I have forgotten one portrait. There was one there, surrounded by a mute and speculative crowd. It showed a man dressed like a rapin of the last century — glossy hair; black, too brilliant eyes; white, too brilliant skin; large, too waxed, curling mustache; and a dapper, trim, and curled imperial. He wore an enormous black silk tie, shining and blue-black on the canvas, and a handsome, new, deadly new, velvet jacket. And behind this incredibly painted painter, more beautiful and more adorned than life, stretched a waving and delicate background of fauna and flora

and what not. It was incredible. It was stupendous. But there was better to come.

In the next room sat the original of the picture himself, painter and sitter too. He was a Pole from Riga, but he looked much more like a Frenchman from Murger. He sat in the middle of the next room, the beheld of all astonished observers. His small, delicately shod and gray-spatted feet were elegantly crossed. His vast flowing cloak was draped over the chair in such a way that the shining black velvet jacket could be seen beneath. His hands clasped a gold-headed cane. His black silk tie waved caressingly under the waxed imperial. And above all this array of magnificence the ineffable white, wax-white face, black dashing eyes, curled mustache, and arched eyebrows looked disdainfully back at the awestruck spectators. This, we said to ourselves, is an artist with a capital A.

There was a painter with me, who showed no less incredulity. He wore a rough tweed coat and looked like a deerstalker. And after this splendid apparition, he doubtless felt like one.

The Graves of the Poets

I never cross the busy bridge of Caulaincourt that looks down upon the sunken cemetery of Montmartre, a cemetery which in places rises to a very hill of tombs, without thinking of the poet Heine. In this curious necropolis, the city of the dead within the city of living, upon which the girls of Montmartre cast in passing the bright indifferent eyes of youth,

the ashes of the poet are not forgotten. Each day his tomb is tended and its faded flowers replaced by the hands of a professional florist, in whose life this daily act of piety has taken the place of romance. Before the war an anonymous German had sent him yearly a sum that would provide fresh flowers for Heine's grave. Hostilities interrupted both the subsidy and the homage. But since the war the florist at the cemetery gates has appointed himself to the succession of this unknown and now vanished devotee. The inspiration of so much piety to a poet dead three quarters of a century caused him to read the poet's works and to succumb, as younger men have fallen, to the brave magic of a sweet singer who loved Paris too well.

Many poets of Paris, in prose and verse, lie in the green valley between the Place de Clichy and the heights of Montmartre. Théophile Gautier and Henri Murger, Alfred de Vigny, the Goncourt brothers, Ernest Renan, the dramatic critic Sarcey, the Pole Stowacki, and the lovely Récamier. Their tombs among the bourgeois dead gleam like the bones of Greek heroes whitening on a hill over the Ægean. Many painters lie with the poets — the rare Greuze, Delaroche and Vernet and Jules Lefebvre. Among the women, besides Mme. Récamier, there are the pathetic Alphonsine Plessis, who was the Dame aux Camélias of the novel of Alexandre Dumas the younger, who is also buried in this cemetery, and that delicate ballet dancer of the Opéra, Emma Livry, who died in the fire of 1863.

The Tomb of Heine in Montmartre Cemetery

The Deputy Baudin, who was killed on the barricades in 1851, has his tomb and a statue in this place; so have the actors Samson and Lemaître, and a host of Parisians celebrated in their day, chemists and composers, sculptors, philosophers, playwrights, and politicians. The Paris of the nineteenth century is written large in the eloquent names on these white stones: that place for which, as for the Rome of the ancients, it was sweet and honourable to die.

The poets in this century have not succeeded in surrounding their lives with the dazzling aura in which walked and talked, drank and gossiped, duelled and hungered, and often died miserably, the Hydropaths and Hirsutes who gaily paraded their desperate poverty in the last quarter of the last century. Of the two or three hundred young men who composed these brilliant and eccentric societies not a quarter are alive, and these are somewhat dazed by the sudden celebrity given to the fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of what was to them an ephemeral manifestation of youth. Of the Hydropaths, who held in abhorrence not only water but all the pale and insipid bourgeois society of their day, not a few of the twoscore survivors have but the faintest recollection of the origins and early adventures of that society. Like the ghosts of heroes confronted by their biographers, they are covered in confusion. But a company which numbered among its members Maurice Rollinat and Jean Richepin, the Greek Jean Moréas, who died with an epigram on his lips, the elegant

anarchist Laurent Tailhade, the aged Barbey d'Aurevilly, and the living Edmond Haraucourt, now curator of the Cluny Museum, was no mean generation.

Many of the dead Hydropaths are buried in Montparnasse, where their spiritual descendants carry on their valiant war. Their bones elbow those of Baudelaire and Guy de Maupassant, François Coppée and Théodore de Banville, the sculptor Bartholdi, and Sainte-Beuve, and also those of the immortal Four Sergeants of La Rochelle, innocent victims of the Restoration.

The poets of Paris have always been the lions of the cafés or the dandies of the boulevard. In recent times Guillaume Apollinaire has personified the one and young Maurice Rostand the other. The prose playwright, however popular, never enjoys that curious aura which crowns the lyric dramatist. And the old theatres of the boulevard, packed nightly with a French audience never seen in the elegant little temples of the modern drama farther west, still sway to the measured rhetoric of the verse play from Racine down to Hugo and Edmond Rostand. A success in this classic form, with its long alexandrines and clumsy, obvious cues, is still the final triumph of a writer for the French theatre. And the accepted language of stage poetry, however worn and bald, has not lost its charm for these curious people, who wear yet in their hearts the faded poet's panache which it was their dream, in their exuberant youth, to wear in their hats.

The Graves of the Poets

And so it was not without emotion that a number of black-coated and elderly, beribboned men listened recently to the evocation of the idyll of Petrarch and Laura, at the inauguration of the Petrarch Museum on the olive-darkened hill above Vaucluse. After five centuries the first poet of the Renaissance still moves the modern Frenchman like a poet of his own times. And on that hill, from which one can see the tall white tower of the Palace of the Popes, across the valley of Avignon, in the little house filled with the murmur of a clear spring where Petrarch saw the bright vision of pagan art, these scholars, bewildered in an age of machinery and overcome with the fast-fading memory of their own dreams in youth, wept unheeded and in sympathy their soft commemorative tears.

VIII

PARIS OF THE GOURMANDS

The Great Restaurants of Paris

Henry James, who could boast of having eaten with gourmandise in Bourg en Bresse not the incomparable poularde of that country, famous even in France, but a tea-drinker's meal of boiled eggs and bread and butter, can be no glutton's guide to Paris. His fastidious shudder at the dishes, the odours, the dust, the crowds, the indolence, and even the wine-buyers of the South — the wine-buyers who filled the inns of Narbonne and made that ancient and dirty city horrible to him — removes him decisively from the company of men who love to sit over a wine-stained table among the ruins of a noble feast. It is not his precise and colourless prose, unhurried and undeflected by emotion, that can whet the appetite and spur the palate in preparation for the joys of the gourmand. And although he appreciated with a scholar's justice the exact relation of Descartes to Rabelais, and of Balzac to them both, he stood nearer to the metaphysician than to the others, and such epicureanism as he has been credited with was mainly of the mind.

It is an entertaining irony that although French cooks, and great ones, may be found all over the world, French cooking can really be enjoyed only in France. A Frenchman suffers in exile. He cannot

breathe an alien air, an air that is not faintly perfumed and aromatized with the mingled odours of wine and garlic, melting butter, the smell of chestnut blossom and wet printer's ink on the first edition of the 'Intransigeant,' waxed floors and old coffee. Whether he be a colonist in Indo-China, playing dominoes and sipping pernod and dreaming of the cafés on the water-front of Marseilles, or a chef de cuisine in New York, sighing for the wide waters and sandy flats of the Loire, his soul sickens with the uncontrollable nostalgia that the Romans knew, far from their hilled city on the dusty plain. The cook's hand loses its cunning. His sauces are mechanical, flat, like a salt that has lost its savour. That subtle and brilliant sharpness of a French dish prepared in France, that golden succulence of a roast chicken, are like wines that will not survive shipment. Away from the temple the priests of this religion quickly lose its secrets.

It is a temple with many altars. Although, as I used to think, the best restaurant in France is not in Paris, but in Rouen, Paris is incomparably the centre of French cooking, the gastronomic capital of France. It has more good restaurants to the square mile than there are in the whole of England or in the whole of Europe east of Prague. Its best restaurants are so equally good that to choose between them is like the task set this town's apt namesake, the shepherd who plunged the antique world in turmoil. There is the admirable establishment of Larue, which,

however, is no better than the historic house of Voisin, nor excelled by Foyot, full of Senators and old ladies, or much superior to Lapérouse, dark and inviting on the quays.

A fifth in this galaxy of great restaurants is that kept by the inimitable Gascon, Prosper Montagné, in the rue de l'Échelle. Montagné is an innkeeper who chooses his clients as fastidiously as he chooses his chickens. If they appear to be unworthy of the great fare he offers to set before them, they are not pressed to stay. He can write a poem about garlic as passionate as a Balkan peasant's song of his forsaken country. To him, indeed, garlic is the rose of Gascony.

Selecting other Paris restaurants to appear on an equality with the foregoing is rather a work of taste than of patience. There are a dozen others that individual preference will place on a level with them, or possibly even above them. The Tour d'Argent, also on the riverside, is evidently not inferior to Lapérouse, and, to some, Frédéric's famous duck, with its silver tag and number, is better than the canard Rouennais served at the inn of the navigator. Near Larue is Lucas, on the Place de la Madeleine, with an excellent cellar. On the Boulevard de la Madeleine is the reconstructed Restaurant Viel. The Grand Vatel, on the rue Saint-Honoré, a bulwark of the gourmand's Paris at the beginning of this century, is still in the first class. There is Henri's, in the rue Saint-Augustin, out of which I recently saw old Arthur Balfour coming, eager as a young man on his first visit to Paris. There is still Maxim's, like a partly abandoned palace of the

bearded kings of the eighties. Paillard, on the corner of the Boulevard des Italiens, rears a regal name and reputation in melancholy pride before it disappears to make room for a bank. Down by the markets, in the street of the Hill of Pride, there is the Escargot, a transformed bistro, warm and intimate. Drouant, in the Place Gaillon, serves an annual luncheon to the literary gourmands of the Académie Goncourt. Out on the road to Neuilly there is a famous roadhouse called the Café du Progrès, of which the proprietor serves his admirable viands with an almost ferocious pride. And then, familiar to the tourist, familiar, too, to all that Paris which lives and dines west of the Madeleine, there are a dozen new rôtisseries and Norman grillrooms between the Concorde and the Étoile, not to mention those old and attractive restaurants under the trees of the Champs-Élysées, Laurent, Ledoyen, Langer, and the Ambassadors.

But the list even of the great restaurants is woefully incomplete. The two best restaurants in Montparnasse are Lavenue and the Trianons. In the business section around the Bourse are a score of great or almost-great restaurants, beginning with the Caneton, the Petit Coin, Maillebuau, Émil, and Génot. Near the Madeleine, on the rue Boissy d'Anglas, facing the former site of the cabaret of the Bœuf sur le Toit, is the crowded place of Jean Casenave, full of pretty women and famous men. The old Bastille quarter has several celebrated eating-houses, among them that of the Quatre Sergents de la Rochelle, who

were executed for pretended conspiracy against the Bourbons and became heroes to the people of Paris. And now the list is already long. Not now — if ever — can it be finished.

On Country Cooking

Cabbage soup, eaten with a pewter spoon, is like no other dish in the world. A cold night, a warm dark interior, a fire crackling on the hearth — or, for lack of it, in a Paris eating-house, that communicative fire of friendly company — what more can winter offer? There is a sense of adventure without, and a sense of security within. There is rough old linen on the table, and, about, dark walls full of shadow. A red wine in a wooden pitcher, those heavy deep old dishes of rough earthenware found only in country inns and the cheap restaurants of Paris, some of the simple triumphs of a humble kitchen and one of the minor cheeses of the French countryside. All gastronomy has no secrets from one who has cherished these.

Cooking, like old Gaul and like period furniture, is divided into its several parts. There is that of the court, when there was a court. There is that of the omnipotent bourgeoisie. There is the country cooking which I have hinted at above. Court cooking in France since the end of the monarchy is largely a myth. Its splendid legend is occasionally revived, when foreign kings are entertained at the Élysée, or the wine stewards and cellarmen of France dine together. Its memories are sometimes served, hot or

cold, at the tables of ambassadors, when the dowagers sail in from the Faubourg Saint-Germain all freighted with emeralds and disdain. At an old château in the provinces, an elderly viscount, ruined by his charming vices, still looks down a long, delicate nose at the sparkling table lit with rare crystal, and is served by a faded groom some dish that was once sniffed by appreciative servingmen at Versailles, or prayed over by Vatel, in the palace of Condé at Chantilly, before that great maître d'hôtel committed suicide on the altar of his art.

Foreign monarchs, rigid in the black regalia of an unpicturesque day, are still served on thin gold plate the reluctant masterpieces of Frenchmen who have no court of their own. But, in the main, court cooking has disappeared from France, only to reappear, like court furniture, at the annual banquets to corset makers that enliven the ceremonial floors of those vast, slightly rococo, tremendously respectable hotels that stand like ramparts along the rue de Rivoli.

The chief mourner at its solemn obsequies is, according to ritual, the President of the Republic. But I cannot feel that he takes his office so seriously. While he eats his way religiously through interminable banquets, with an air of apologizing for this simple Republican cooking, that might have been so different under a monarchy, he is probably recalling, like a loyal Gascon, the fragrant dishes of the South. He would exchange all these triumphs of official cooking for the odorous garbure of Provence, that robust

soup from a black pot under the rafters, in a low house in the country of Mistral.

And whenever I sit down at a rough table in a humble restaurant to eat, like the wife of Pantagruel, the minor products of the ox, I think of genial Gaston Doumergue, a prisoner in his solemn Élysée, condemned to the sad martyrdom of an unfamiliar gastronomic régime, and sighing for the simple food of his own province.

Middle-class cooking in France is like the middle-class everywhere, solid and tireless. A turbot, a leg of mutton, a cheese and a pear — how many wrinkled notaries sit down in their stone houses on the market-square, those old stone houses with the oval gilt medallion of their profession on the wall or the gate, to sigh over the days when people bought properties and sold them, and litigation was a ripe, prosperous failing peculiar to the times.

But even this is not the cooking of the real middle class, the great burghers of Balzac, farmers of lands and farmers of taxes, the men who cooked a flock of geese à la Bordelaise, or a dozen turkeys en salmis, to entertain their southern tenants on rent day. This, too, the only recent survival of the great days of provincial cooking in France, when partridges were roasted on a spit, and a middle-class household in the great cities of France was threatened on days of hospitality with a long succession of hors d'œuvres, cold and hot, and as many major dishes as there were guests, has almost disappeared. The centre of the

table, in that age of extreme Victorian realism, was frequently decorated with a jellied head of calf or boar, and the flattered guests floundered heavily through a sea of viands, seasoned with appropriate conversation as prescribed by the great masters of etiquette of the times.

Fortunately for us, perhaps, the manners have changed, and although the diplomats of our day, like Talleyrand with his two immortal turbots, still believe it possible to influence instinctive national attitudes by a carefully calculated use of gastronomy, the personal preferences of our diplomats are as simple as the profound tastes of the people. And this explains, perhaps, the present almost exaggerated return to the inn cooking that once prevailed in this country, and the equally exaggerated creation in Paris, during the last few years, of restaurants of the inn type. It suffices that Aristide Briand, who impersonates in his lazy, genial character the inn-table diplomacy of our time, should on an historic occasion signify his quite sound preference for a mountain trout cooked at Thoiry to all the dubious elegances of hotel cooking in Geneva, for all fashionable diners to go outside Paris in search of the obscurer eating-houses in the suburbs.

But there is something gastronomically deeper in this vogue than a mere fashion. During the last century in France cooking, like furniture, suffered from an extreme artificiality. Both were in urgent need of a fresh inspiration from the elegant simplicity of the

seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Too many sauces are as bad as too many cooks. And somebody, apparently, has found that out.

The Wines of Paris

The towns that grow their own wine are like no other towns. They lie among their vine-covered hillsides like patriarchs nourished by their children. No communities are nearer to the secret life of the soil. Not the crude cattle towns, noisy with the life of inns and the movement of heavy men and beasts. Not the sleepy old agricultural towns, full of seed-merchants and men weighing grain in their calloused hands, and lawyers nurtured by quarrels over land, and slow wise talk of crops and weather. And still more not the blackened, dismal industrial cities, full of smoky taverns, and men drinking beer and spirits, around which no blade of grass or head of wheat grows in a radius of twenty miles.

The towns in the wine country have a character all their own. In Burgundy they are, like the countryside around them, distinguished by the vast black vats and slow white oxen peculiar to this passionate industry which gave the world its greatest wine. They sprawl over the fruitful land, easy and luxurious, with none of that narrow, hard, fighting intensity peculiar to the Norman and Flemish towns. From Macon, on the banks of the wide Saône, to the towns on the lower slopes of the Pyrénées, from the villages of the Loire, the vineyards of Touraine with their turreted castles and their neat hillsides, to Chinon

where the red statue of Rabelais broods over the changelessness of man, the wine towns preserve undestroyed their faith, as of vestals guarding against the flames a holy oil.

Where other places live by a gross commerce in coal or chemicals or leather or glass or cement, these sparkling towns of the wine country, whose names are like music in a gourmet's ears, live in the proud humility of those who live not by bread alone. Theirs is no rude product made with human hands. Its industry blackens no rafters, darkens no sky, sullies no air. Once a year the earth yields its golden or its purple sap. The slow ox-wagons bear their fragrant burden to the crushing vats, and the mild and glorious juice flows like a still stream into the cellars of the town.

It is not so long since Paris might be counted among the wine cities. And although the yield of its remaining vineyards has disappeared from commerce, there are still wines made which may boast of Parisian origin. Only thirty years ago, at the end of what was perhaps a romantic period in Paris, the young men who drove out gaily to the suburbs on Sunday mornings, in the yellow fiacres which have sadly disturbed by their absence the Parisian colour-scheme, could pledge the eyes of their mistresses in local wines. In those bosky arbours in the gardens of little inns on the banks of Meudon, of Suresnes, of Marly and Argenteuil, which almost alone survive to us of the grubby romantic background of the Victorians, with

their yellow gas-flares and high linen collars, silk hats and side-whiskers, the worn oak tables are still stained with the innumerable little fruity stains of those Parisian wines. The vines which yielded these honest if sometimes harsh juices might still be seen, at the beginning of this century, in many an inn garden around the fortifications of Paris. The famous terrace of Saint-Germain grew an excellent wine. And even now several keepers of wineshops at Marly le Roi, in the shadow of the ruins of the Sun King's magnificent summer palace at Marly, offer to their friends an amber fluid of excellent quality, crushed from tiny white grapes that have survived the downfall of the monarchy, have survived even the terrible phylloxera.

The vines of Argenteuil, another suburb of Paris, were planted centuries before the time of Louis XIV. Most of them have since been replaced by asparagus, for which this suburb is chiefly celebrated, but five years ago, when Argenteuil feasted the thousandth anniversary of its vineyards, there was still enough local wine grown to satisfy the revellers. The rosy wine of Argenteuil, which delighted, according to legend, the robust palate of Charlemagne, was famous in the middle of the last century. Its effect on visitors from the metropolis, of both sexes, was such that the chansonniers already established in the Latin Quarter, and then possibly meditating their ultimate flight to Montmartre, made frequent allusions to its unsuspected potency and insidious charm.

In addition to Argenteuil and Marly, there are thirty-three officially classified communes within fifteen miles of Paris, where wine is made from local grapes. Even Saint-Ouen, on the road to a once famous abbey in Normandy, and now a deplorable gray agglomeration of factories and steel mills, has its vineyards. A few years ago one could still see, over the door of a rustic cottage, the old sign which wine-growers once favoured — a bunch of vine leaves — and the description 'Vigneron,' and below them the name of the husbandman of this rare vineyard, overtaken now and almost buried by the harsh advance of the city — the name, so satisfactory in its symbolism, of 'Charmant.'

On Dining Out in Paris

Ah, the moon-filled Parisian nights of summer! The river dreaming between its historic walls. The bridges trembling in shadowy reflections on as shadowy water. The Louvre crouching like a tiger among the trees of the other shore. The varied lights, violet and yellow and green, of the street lamps. The Eiffel Tower, immense, remote, lifeless, in the spangled night. The crowded quays with their high, dark roof-line, their swarming, mysterious population. And over all this part of the old city, Notre Dame, like a pale conflagration in the sky. Above the dark, whispering trees a sudden white fire under the high moon, and Notre Dame flung like music into the starry void, music made visible, sound carved and fluted and curved like stone. The party is spaced

along the quayside in couples, hushed voices in the enchanted night. An old, red taxi rumbles by, and stops with a scream of brakes. A match flares and a window is lowered. The glowing end soars through space in sparks.

Dinner in Paris is an affair of philosophy, like a poem or an oil well in Persia. Memories are shaken together over a fine screen. The perfect place and the perfect moment — how rarely they meet! Oysters in a dark wineshop full of zinc and bottles, the great dark, sprawling oysters, coppery-green like a mermaid's scales, dangerous as a mermaid's hair. A wine in dark, labelless glass, pelure à l'oignon. An intimate, gay, mysterious wine, never encountered again except on nights with a full moon. Oysters, and a pâté de lièvre, and quails sur canapé. That strange wine, not red nor amber. So many earnest, beautiful women with their air of living for this moment of the intense Latin day. The still, mild air of the streets outside, and inside the restaurant a warm intimacy of colour, the excitement of a new adventure, the bright sparkle and heady spice of Parisian life.

This city has a mood for every minute of the day, and a restaurant for every mood. There is the vast, expansive, and expensive mood, the lavish frenzy that takes you to a tremendous Lucullan feast chez Foyot, or Lapérouse or Larue or Voisin or Émil or Drouant or Montagné — their name is legion. There is the light, trifling, indifferent temper when you wave away wine lists and waiters and chasseurs and vestiaire women,

Notre Dame de Paris

and, seating yourself, hat on head, on a high stool at the bar of Prunier's, drink a glass of Chablis or Pouilly and eat crab sandwiches or écrevisses à la nage as if life were equally but a bright coralline thing with claws. There is the small, intimate occasion when a table under green trees in the Bois de Boulogne, with long shafts of sunlight spearing down upon the glass and silver through the verdant roof, is the only appropriate stage setting. And there is that vast, comfortable urge to dine Gargantuanly on black, slippery, upholstered seats in old brown brasseries, and through a long evening, cloudy with smoke and argument, behind beer in beakers and mountains of redolent, satisfying Teutonic fare, to let life roll by in pageant after pageant like a Wagnerian opera, full of thunder and magic.

But is is only in brasseries that those long, conversational, digestive dinners are possible. In other places waiters begin to assert their rights long before midnight. At nine it is late to order dinner. At ten the tables are denuded; the yawning sommelier, in the middle distance between table and cellar, lingers on, merely for financial reasons. The fat lady at the desk has long since brilliantly balanced her bookkeeping by double entry and is now busy upon her complexion. Soon the lustrous room, once white and gay with flowers and food and music and wine, will be a desert. When the last party, sitting among the ruins of its feast like gipsies encamped on the crumbling Acropolis, has moved reluctantly away, quest-

ing for new fields to conquer, sleek patron and fat lady and weary waiters will vanish into the welcoming night. For them, as for ourselves, the evening is to be continued elsewhere.

The problem is more difficult than it sounds. A long evening in Paris bristles with dangers and yawns with uncomfortable gaps. There is no duller place in the world than a Montmartre cabaret half an hour before it is warmed up. There is no colder valley in the waste places of the mind than the desolate hour of diminishing enthusiasm between the dinner and the dance. It was to bridge that depressing, icy crevasse, I imagine, that the Bœuf sur le Toit first opened up its bright, intellectual splendours to the hoi polloi in the rue Boissy d'Anglas, and that its successor in the rue Penthièvre recently burst into its full exotic flower, and that another music-box of a cabaret, the cheerful, caricature-festooned cellar of the New York Bar, in the rue Daunou, has long attracted the curious, the bored, and the thirsty. In other quarters, of course, character cabarets, fuller of song than of dance and of wine than either, have long struggled against the invidious and the invading jazz. The uproarious and authentic dungeon called Les Oubliettes Rouges, reached precariously by groping through courtyards and alleys as old as Notre Dame, fills the night with choruses always mad and often melodious. On the Boulevard Montparnasse the painter Hiler's amazing creation, 'The Jockey,' too exotic to last in its earliest form, roars and sways and rocks away

every night like a fo'c'sle full of chanting sailors. On the rue Vavin, the rightly named Inn of the Vikings; no cabaret this, but very picturesquely full of yellow hair and schnapps and aquavits and schmorbrods and oak tables, and the rattling mitrailleuse speech of the Swedes, roars defiance at the College Inn across the way. And grandly indifferent to them all, encompassing the Quarter like an army, rises nightly the proud organ-swell of the four great Montparnassian cafés, the Dome, the Rotonde, the Coupole, and the Select, standing like sentinels at the crossroads of Bohemia and of the world.

Paris by Night

The blue electric fires of the boulevards, hanging in alchemist's globes from the sky, etch them in dark relief. They stand on a street corner, like the heavy figures in Rembrandt's 'Night Watch,' arrested in reflection. Their ronde de nuit is about to begin. They are between two worlds, the sleeping and the waking. As the stroke of midnight booms faintly across the half-dead city from the white-domed Sacré Cœur the vast, motionless car beside them purrs into life. They climb in with a sudden cheerfulness, rubbing sleep from their feigned indifferent eyes, and behind the citizen of all countries and of none who is their guide on this adventure the noctambules glide forward into the mysteries of the city. They have set out to see Paris by Night.

There was a time when a man would have to get up

very early in the morning to see the night life of this city — very early, and stay up very late. He could set out at dawn from the Opera and not have exhausted the distractions of a hundred yards of the boulevard, to the east or to the west, by ten in the morning. The hole made in the wall of the Boulevard des Capucines by a shell during the siege of 1870, and since made into a bar, is the only surviving relic of those heroic times, and although the hole has since become a hole-and-corner it still offers entertainment of a kind to tastes of a kind. But the even older bar de nuit in the rue Scribe, where heavy games of hazard were played before poker was known in Paris, has long since disappeared.

It was the Russian loan of 1897, incredibly enough, which changed Paris by Night into Paris by Day. Before that year more than half the citizens of the French capital were rentiers, living on no visible means of subsistence. Having nothing to do, they preferred to do it after dark, and so the cafés of the boulevards remained open all night to minister to their not unreasonable desires. But the four hundred million gold francs poured into the bottomless pit of the Russian loan ended the rentier class in France. The all-night cafés closed at the ridiculous hour of two in the morning and the idle noctambules of the boulevards were changed over night into active men who caught trains, drank quick and dangerous apéritifs at the Café du Commerce, learned the language of the Bourse, put fancy waistcoats away forever, and went to the wood no more.

It was about that time, by a singular and fortuitous coincidence, that the grand dukes made their appearance — the grand dukes with their caviare, their coachmen, their dog-collars of Ural diamonds, their habit of breaking glass, and their magnificent extravagance. And it was then that the phrase 'le tour des grand-ducs' came into the language of polite society — a tour which began behind the scenes at the ballet and ended under the breakfast table in the restaurant of the Tranquil Father. But the times have changed, and the tour of the grand dukes has become a tour of the innocent and inquiring tourist, and instead of a bearded coachman of the Don Cossacks, full of oaths and vodka, there is a Swiss guide with a megaphone, and the nearest the tourist gets to night life is the door of the Rat Mort and the leafy square of the Butte of Montmartre, where Poulbot's grimy urchins hunt between the red-checkered tables with extended hand.

But they see something, these night-prowling tourists. From the dark nymph-haunted shadows behind the silent Opera they climb by the cobblestoned rue des Martyrs to the place where three inns huddle together looking southward over the roofs of Paris. And then into the Place Pigalle, where sometimes in the summer between the cries of chasseurs and grooms and merry-go-rounds and foreigners cheated by other foreigners, a little fountain can be heard playing music like that of hidden pipes, and across the square shine the famous fantastic names which the genius of

Montmartre created for itself in the youth of Steinlen and Willette and Murger and others long since dead.

From the Moulin Rouge to the Moulin de la Galette there is a gulf of years as wide as that between Mistinguett and Murger, although you can walk there in five minutes. The fire which destroyed the old Moulin Rouge destroyed more things than the famous mill, and the old apache went out when the new apache came in. In the back-street bals musettes near the Bastille and the flaring dance-halls outside the gates of Paris under the murky shadows of the mined fortifications they draw a knife now and again. But mostly they are jeunes gens — sullen, heady youths urged on by dark-eyed young women intoxicated with the monotonous hoarse music of Mistinguett. The real apache died of mortification when he found himself popularized in a song.

Up at the Moulin de la Galette you can find traces of his stormy passage through Parisian history. His wild, easy slang, his free manners, his slouch, his drooping mop of hair, are perpetuated among this generation of idolators. Like a barroom bad man, he has his cheap imitators. He has given his harsh, inelegant violence to every bad dancer on the floor. The lonely youth drinking eau de vie and brooding over his unsuccess with women frowns at his apache-like reflection in the glass until apache courage fills his little town-bred soul. But the most timid tourist need not be discouraged by this. The amateur apache is only wondering if his resources will run to the

'movies' and still leave him enough to pay for his drink.

By the time the night-life seekers reach the Halles it is morning, and there a world has long been awake. There where the tour of the grand dukes ended a horde of creatures in rags stir uneasily from their huddled sleep on the stones, sniff questioningly the keen dawn wind, and scramble over the débris of fruit and bread and vegetables dropped from the green and red and yellow and blue mountains brought through the night by slow, stumbling horses and stacked by cheerful, noisy market porters in the high, dark, Gothic cathedral which is the marketplace of Paris. Here Montmartre burns out like a candle and Paris by Day begins.

On the Art of Eating

Between two meals snatched in a cafeteria all glass and porcelain, more like a hospital or the waiting-room at the Pennsylvania Station than the old, smoke-browned inns of France or even the intimate, early Pullman comfort of the Café de la Paix, I read a little book about Boileau, the first French gourmet. It was, naturally, all about eating, and fresh from my inspiring meal of toast and milk, I perused with curiosity not unmixed with fury a passage in which the innkeeper brings on a pair of freshly skinned eels in a basket, all green and dripping with water and odorous herbs, and before proceeding with the matelote inquires if his guests will not eat an omelette while waiting for the dish of eels stewed in red wine. 'Get

on with the omelette,' says Boileau superbly, and the omelette appears foaming with the last touch of butter administered to the pan. Meanwhile, good Master Boileau, who refuses to live down to his name of Drinkwater, degusts a light, imperceptibly sparkling wine of Anjou grown in a rocky place where monks once walked.

In the same book I came upon an old song which might have been written by François Villon:

> Why should
> Murderers and thieves be punished,
> And not
> The poisoners
> Of liquor?

To which I would add — 'and of food.'

I went to America with considerable gastronomic curiosity. I went away with it completely satisfied. I found that a great many Americans know more and care more about good cooking than the majority of Europeans, but they are satisfied to eat hurriedly and badly, and to allow the fine old traditions of Southern gastronomy, the vast Rembrandtesque dishes of Dutch Pennsylvania, the redolent cuisine of New Orleans, and the hot spiced Spanish meats of Southern California to die out like Prince Albert coats and beards and an old jazz tune. In a city where a new skyscraper appears every fifteen minutes, but which tolerates the infernal barbaric racket of the Elevated, there is no room for a kitchen with shining copper pans and pewter ladles and a vast three-chinned woman called Marie. The stout women round whose

Les Halles

voluminous skirts small children and chickens and tabby cats used to linger have gone the way of all flesh and taken their unforgettable instinct for beautiful cooking with them. Marie is now a slim, unnatural blonde who plugs keys for a telephone company. And so a whole generation of Americans is doomed to dyspepsia until the law of natural compensation provides a brand-new stomach lining made of concrete and steel and hardened to withstand intense heat and frost.

By which I mean ice water. Overheated offices and apartments are responsible for a thirst the quenching of which produces over-cooled stomachs. No nation can live on ice water and digest the simple but odorous dishes of the French. Boileau's omelette dripping with yellow butter, butter that had a slight flavour of hazel nuts, would cause General Motors to fluctuate wildly for a week.

Marie would not stand for ice water. Marie, the only, the original, is the cook to Aristide Briand. She is fat, and she is fifty if she's a day, but oh, adolescent, as they say in this country, how she can shake a wicked cream sauce! For a generation Marie has been carefully preserving from ruin the old, hardy, and discerning stomach of a man who has been Premier of France nine times and promises to be as many more if he doesn't weaken. Her little dinners in M. Briand's apartments on the Quai d'Orsay are events, more worth while recording in the history of France than the fluctuations of the franc. Yes, Marie would not approve of ice water, nor of cafeterias.

'Pompano,' said an old Paris gourmet to me reflectively, a man with a liver five times the normal size but still able to stand up to a partridge, a bottle and four or five liqueur glasses of Armagnac, 'Pompano is the best fish I have ever met in a long life devoted mainly to the pursuit of a fish with fine flavour and no bones.' So the first day I put my knees under a table in New York I said, making sure of the accent, 'Pompano.' No, it was. It had been frozen, I discovered later, and a hot-water fish doesn't take kindly to ice. But I am willing to believe that, by and large, grilled, broiled, stewed, or baked, pompano is the best fish in the world save for the lake fish of Siberia and the Caucasus.

I was emboldened to experiment with oysters. When you have said oyster in America you have said a mouthful. There is nothing in Europe, save in the Zuyder Sea, so large, so juicy, so solid, as the Blue Point and the Deep Sea. The Zeeland oysters of the Dutch are like large silver medallions, larger than silver dollars and heavier on the digestion. The Portuguaise of the French is large and shapeless and looks like a man in a green cloak with a black beard. Once acquired, the taste is excellent, but one must bury the fear of being poisoned by the copper bottoms of ships. But oh, for the Belons of France, small, round, and pale, like nuns in a Flemish convent, and the Whitstable Natives, that Julius Cæsar invaded Britain to eat.

I will admit that a steak in America is a steak. I will admit that I like turkey, cranberry sauce, baked potatoes, Maryland fried chicken, strawberry short-

cake, waffles, cornbread, ice cream and apple pie. Any European schoolboy would adore these, and rightly so, but an army does not march on pie and ice cream. It needs a diet at once plainer and higher, like the diet of Aristide Briand. A hare stewed in old Chambertin, or a capon made into a paste and baked a golden brown under a light crust. Or just a plain gigot à la Bretonne, a leg of young mutton larded with garlic. And a red wine of Bordeaux.

The Song of Wine

Like the wild talk of men in barrooms, melancholy and delicious, one curious tale, now and again, haunts our shadowy lives like the dazzling image of reality. Like a tale of Conrad, or the strange story once told me by a bearded Australian, born in a miner's tent at Ballarat, or the undreamed-of tragedy, sombre and disturbing, of a life unfolded within hand's reach and ear's hearing of our own, some unexpected narrative twists its own unfamiliar thread into the clear fabric of our lives. Of such is Edgar Allan Poe's tale of 'The Fall of the House of Usher.' Of such are some stories of Somerset Maugham. I can still feel the dark emotion aroused in me in childhood by a tale of travellers lost in a thick forest. But the terror I can remember was not terror at the forest, although that had its own peculiar and familiar phantoms not to be despised. The fear inspired in my young imagination by this story, with its dark and dreadful woodcuts, grew to overwhelming grandeur when the travellers reached the Half-Way House. I can see that habita-

tion now as I saw it through the clear perspective of this otherwise forgotten story — the white house in the small clearing, its low roof, as if overburdened with the weight of surrounding trees; the house shameful and apparently vacant, except for the heavy secret which dwelt in it; all the expectant air heavy with foreboding and desire.

What the travellers sought, whence they came and whither they were going, only Freud perhaps could tell, as he only could reveal the secret of the apprehension created in a young mind by that Half-Way House, alone, clear, and inexplicably malignant in its setting of the dark forest. But something of that thrill at a dark splendour, the joy of Poe in writing and of his readers in reading the story of the unexplained doom that fell upon the House of Usher, I have just had renewed for me by a story in a book by Charles Legras called 'The Narrow Arms of the Vine.' M. Legras has written a novel about wine, on which subject some unborn Homer may once write an Iliad.

In that still unfamiliar country back of Bordeaux, where the old châteaux stand among their historic vineyards like patriarchs among their progeniture, he sets the action of his story, in which the Vine, as the gods of the ancients, moves mysteriously the actions of men. On one of the high roads to Pauillac, the centre of this rich wine region, he locates the château of Ux. A round tower, a moat, high chimneys, and several poplars among the surrounding elms. The cellars of the old château are stored with

wine, with old wines too rare and too expensive to find a ready sale in these times. The family has fallen into decadence, and the house and its lands are being divided among strangers. But the old château and its secret still hold the alien purchasers in awe. In one wall of the innermost cellar, the legend runs, an almost forgotten ancestor had his corpse immured. So long as his skeleton remained upright the castle would endure. But when it crumbled to dust beneath the unimaginable weight of the edifice, the house of Ux would fall like the House of Usher.

The tale, as far as I know, is true. Stranger things have happened in the old history of France and the older history of wine. The skeleton that supports the old castle is no more feeble than the tradition that supports the use of wine. More people are drinking wine, but fewer people are drinking good wine. The old vintages of Bordeaux and Burgundy are like giant trees overgrown by parasitic vines. The oak gives strength to the ivy, but itself dies.

There is a mysticism of wine as there is a mysticism of love. Both provoke a kindred exaltation of the spirit and a drunkenness of the senses. The peasant in the wine countries always seems to me to be subtly different from the peasant elsewhere. From the dark purplish-green leaves of the vines in summer he draws an inspiration alien to the heavier clay of the cattle farmers of the north and west. From the earliest promise of the grape springs a heady illusion that in these green globes, symbolic of the earth spirit, lie

riches and the joy of men. During the long drought that threatens disaster, the wine growers grow, like their vines, desiccated and sullen. They watch the rain clouds rise over the hills but never break. They see the hot sun, recently so beneficent, burst morning after morning through the gray promise of rain, scattering their illusions.

And then, when they have gone disconsolately to bed, grumbling with the stoic grumbling of the peasant against ungenerous Providence, the first faint patter of raindrops rouses the village from its sleep. The houses awake, light after light, like soldiers in a barrack-room. Windows are thrown open and heads thrust forth to smell and to consider the miraculous rain. It is near midnight and four hours to go till dawn, but doors open and the village buzzes with talk. In shirtsleeves the folk of the wine country come down from their beds, and from behind the fagots in their dark, earth-smelling cellars bring the bottles of a fruitful year. As the gentle rain falls on their dry vineyards, reviving the sap in the vines and the lustre of the grape, they pour out joyously into the thick glasses on their rude tables the purple juice of another miraculous vintage.

The rain has saved their crop, and as its soft music enters the low-raftered cottages it is as no music ever heard by earthly ears. Its slow dropping on leaves and flowers, its low gurgle on roof and gutter, is the very voice of the elixir in the bottle, purple or golden, the earth-old music of the joy in the glass. It is the Song of Wine.

IX

PARISIANS PAST AND PRESENT

The End of the Idler

It is exactly one hundred years ago since sidewalks were first officially constructed in Paris — in the rue Saint-Honoré and the rue Richelieu. And by one of those curious ironies that have become the commonplaces of our civilization, the year in which this interesting anniversary occurs also witnesses the end of walking as a social pastime. By applying to Paris the street discipline long enforced by the despotic police of New York, Prefect Jean Chiappe, the amiable Corsican dictator who now governs our destinies, has condemned to sudden extinction the art, so essentially Parisian, of idling.

The flâneur, a brilliant and, it seemed, ineradicable type of the Paris boulevards, has been snuffed out like a candle of the Second Empire. He has followed into obscurity the eighteenth-century Idler of Addison. That graceful art which was more than an attitude, which was partly a philosophy and partly, as Balzac brilliantly observed, a science, 'the gastronomy of the eye,' that art of contemplative lounging which found long after it had been practised in France and elsewhere a subtle word in the language to define it — the verb 'flâner' — has come to a silent and unobserved end. In a day when it is no longer possible

under the civil code for a free citizen to choose his own moment for crossing a traffic-ridden street, the professional flâneur must choose some other profession. His right to exist has been unceremoniously taken from him, in a world which has forgotten how to idle.

He was perhaps the most picturesque as well as the most characteristic of Parisian types. That most charming hour of the day in Paris, the hour between eleven and noon, was his undisputed empire. At the beginning of his brief reign he descended into a street which had not yet known the odours of gasoline and in which, in springtime, could still be detected the faint unforgettable fragance, also characteristic of Paris in its great days, of the spiky blossom of the horse-chestnut. And without haste and without indifference, attentive to the slightest feature of the very human life which went on around him, the most human and most attractive life in the world to a philosopher and an idler, he made his way to the boulevards which are like a dashing curve drawn across the centre of Paris.

There he found himself among his fellows. Other flâneurs met him on the wide, tree-shaded sidewalks, also characteristic of this city, uneven and rolling like himself — flâneurs dressed to kill, when killing was easy. In a country which has no clubs of any note, but many remarkable cafés, they made and unmade the fortune of a coffee-house with a wave of their elegant gloved hands. Once it became fashionable to meet at the long, luxurious hour of the apéritif

on the terrace of a certain café, all Paris rushed there. And in that Paris has not changed, or any city for that matter. These cafés were their clubs. The waiters knew them intimately, and served them with the mixture of democratic affection and deference that only an old French waiter (a member of that curious race which produces only two types, waiters and cab drivers, and otherwise is barren) can show to a client. At the tables of their favourite café they read the morning newspaper, neatly rolled round its long stick; they drank their morning chocolate, or sipped their absinthe; they wrote their letters on the thin French paper, with its curious odour and strange exotic charm, unforgettable from one's first experience of it; they talked over the latest scandal of the day, social or political, and, above all, they looked out with incurably curious eyes, with the passionate interest of the born idler, upon the passing spectacle of the boulevards.

To this constant drama the flâneur was a permanent subscriber. He had the stage box, and knew the theatre of life from back and front. Among the qualities which distinguished him from the merely idle, or the merely curious, he had that of philosophic calm. He had also, according to an admirable definition 'gaiety upon occasion, reflection at need, observation always, a trifle of originality, a lively mind, more or less culture and, above all, a conscience at ease.'

Gavarni has prepared his portrait for us. But the

true Parisian idler, the man born with the scent of the boulevard in his nostrils, is to be recognized from the early issues, so attractive to the collector, of the 'Rire' and the 'Assiette au Beurre.' There in these suggestive pages are drawn the flâneurs of those nineties which made the term 'fin de siècle' mysteriously provocative and slightly dangerous in the romantic atmosphere of girls' schools in Germany and Russia, until even now a linguistic corruption of that dashing phrase may be recognized in the conversation of elderly ladies in Central-European spas. His long profile, with its drooping whiskers, his silk hat and slender coat, his gloves and ivory-topped cane, have almost disappeared from the Parisian gallery. Modern French politicians look like horse dealers, and modern French writers like automobile salesmen. They are not, to look at, gentlemen that a gentleman would desire to know. And a hasty glance over any café terrace on the Boulevard des Italiens suffices to indicate that manners and fashions have deplorably changed.

Alone remain of that Paris which was the last citadel of the idler, long since driven out of London, the little boats that dash up the Seine to Meudon and Saint-Cloud from the pier opposite the Louvre, and a few rusty old fiacres that come out with the spring. The old seagoing hack, remembered pleasantly by students and old ladies and young men in love, has almost disappeared. That valiant old Berlin cab-driver who recently drove his crazy vehicle all the long road to Paris had arrived, in fact, only to take

part in the fiacre's lugubrious obsequies. And when the fiacre goes it will have followed the flâneur, who beat it in the race for extinction but by a short neck.

La Goulue

Some women seem born to exercise a fatal fascination over the men of their generation. The real history of our own time, the real history of all times, the essential disturbing revelation of hidden lives and passions which is to all men, in books or conversation, the most profound and the most moving, is the story of the passionate influences which have urged them to creation or to despair. Elizabeth and her favourite Essex, Diane de Poitiers, the lovely and chaste Madame Récamier, Cora Pearl and her innumerable desperate lovers, down to the London artists' model and the young English painter who killed himself for her last year — their lives are the trifling but desperate clues in the dark maze of the history of mankind. Posterity will seize on them with avidity as upon a silken thread which leads from a dark cavern into daylight. The fading colours of history are already dull and meaningless, and only the scarlet of violence and passion, from Troy to the last tremendous epic of our time, is undimmed.

And so the tale of the nineteenth century in the manners and morals of Europe cannot be told without mention of Louise Weber, better known as La Goulue. Her death in a Paris hospital a few days ago released a flood of recollections, in which occur and recur the

names of the great artists, the reigning princes, the arbiters of the elegances of the decade which closed that great century. Herself a creature of the fatality with which she seemed invested, she survived by many years her victims, to die ingloriously in poverty and a bitter old age.

La Goulue at sixteen was a washerwoman's daughter, ironing shirts and starching collars in a little Paris laundry. At seventeen she was dancing the French cancan in a new quadrille, christened the Quadrille Réaliste, at the Moulin Rouge. That was in 1890. The famous Montmartre dance-hall was then the temple of the comfortable paganism of which Paris was the new Acropolis. It was no neo-Greek stuff, this hearty Parisian philosophy, which attracted to France the bearded monarchs, the Greek merchant princes, the Russian grand dukes, the prima donnas and the ballerinas, as well as the painters and writers already beginning their revolt, in half-youthful impatience, half-cynical young-men-of-the-worldliness, against the crusading asceticism of the Ruskins, the Rossettis and the rest of the romantic mediævalists. It was the age of steam, the fiacre, the recently discovered Gibus or collapsible opera hat (which all self-respecting Parisians wore all day), the cabinet particulier, and the two-decker omnibus. Rodin was still a young lion and Anatole France was writing sprightly literary criticism in the 'Temps.' There was as yet no Dreyfus Case, no Boer War and no Entente Cordiale. The 'Chat Noir' had been running for several years. Montmartre was the fashionable at-

traction of Paris, and not yet a resort for foreigners and provincials. And La Goulue was dancing nightly at the Moulin Rouge.

She had the insolent beauty of youth. With a peasant-like nobility of form she had a peasant's disdain of mere beauty. She paraded it as something apart, marketable as a commodity only admired by fools. But into her dancing, into the intricate steps of that fantastic and fleshly ballet, she threw her insolence of young flesh like a challenge. Each step was an invitation, and each invitation was a repulse. At the stately and fascinating spectacle of frilly linens, of arched foot, of swelling throat and reckless eyes, provocative and audacious then in a manner that would be mildly old-fashioned now, the audience of tall-hatted men and fanning and furbelowed women went wild. The Quadrille became the rage of Paris, and its dancers, La Goulue and her partners, Valentin le Désossé, Grille d'Égout, and Nini Patte-en-l'Air — all names characteristic of the apache cult which was then beginning — achieved celebrity.

It was perhaps the assiduous attention of the painter Toulouse-Lautrec which more than that of any other admirer secured immortality for La Goulue. In those early years he was never long absent from the Moulin Rouge. His meagre and even grotesque frame burned with a morbid, sad, inextinguishable passion for the blonde and insolent dancer, and bowed over his eternal absinthe, he followed her number night after night with the sombre devotion of a fanatic. His canvases still reveal, notwithstanding

the disparity in fashions and manners, something of the direct and brutal seduction she had for him and for others, her more successful admirers.

But public taste is fickle, the French cancan fell out of fashion, and after ten years of celebrity, the dancing days of La Goulue came to an end. With her considerable hoard of gold louis she purchased a travelling menagerie, and became a tamer of wild beasts. She found it more difficult, she would boast bitterly in after years, than taming men. But tame them she did, and although her lions occasionally mauled her, giving her scars that she would display with pride, her own wild and untamable nature found its expression in this queer commerce. But fortune never favoured her again. Her circus did not prosper. And some years ago her son, the only being on whom, with the exception of her beasts, she lavished an undivided affection, died suddenly. She began to drink without restraint, and in her cups, a lonely and embittered woman, would babble of the princes who had been her lovers, of the great artists, Toulouse-Lautrec and Renoir and others, who had been her slaves. Until recently she was seen occasionally in Montmartre, and something noble in her bearing, something wild and untamable in her eye, still betrayed her past glories. She died in poverty, in a pauper's bed, but the event has not passed without notice, and after nearly a quarter of a century of public indifference she regains her stature in the history of her generation — La Goulue, the Gluttonous, the Insatiable.

The Apache

The Apache

A recent Parisian mystery, the death and dismemberment of 'La belle Gaby,' whose sad remains were discovered on some waste ground at Saint-Denis, once a royal town and the tomb of kings, now a pathetic industrial suburb and a winter encampment of gipsies, has thrown fresh enlightenment on the habits of that peculiarly Parisian type, the apache.

The old apache died out during the war, died gallantly or turned honest. The new apache is a child of the war, a product of those evil years when parental discipline was engaged elsewhere and when children shared, for better or for worse, the general indifference to peace-time conventions. They have a certain studied picturesqueness, these sinister children who have grown up. The young men wear smart, too smart, caps, pulled well down over the eyebrow and one ear. Their necks are shaven, under the sleek, oiled mat of hair. A muffler, carefully tied, masks the absence of collar; is, indeed, the standard of apache elegance. Their trousers are cut closely at the knee, loosely at the ankle. A cigarette, generally extinguished, droops from one corner of the mouth, a mouth of an exaggerated and sometimes even affected looseness.

In the little narrow bars near the gates of Paris, near the sporting centres, the stadiums and the race-tracks, or near the Central Markets, they play dominoes or manille all day with a certain professional air of indolence. The indolence, however, conceals a hard and perpetual watchfulness, as the stranger to

the bar becomes instantly aware. They speak a language at once sealed and violent, a tongue full of strange and apparently easy idioms, beneath whose light affectations is hidden a deadly intention. Their hatred of the police is instinctive, real, and comprehensible, for the police alone resist their secret tyranny, check their habitual insolence, are indifferent to the romantic spell they sometimes exercise over youthful imaginations in their narrow circle, and are certain of victory in the long, unequal battle.

The apaches, like the Mafia in Sicily, have a code of honour which regulates their relations both among themselves and with the external world, peaceful or intimidating. A quarrel over a girl is settled with knives, expertly and silently. A back street, a bar-room, a patch of ground on the ruins of the old fortifications provides the scene for a duel which is also an execution. The victor is protected from the dangerous inquisitiveness of the police by an obstinate, meaning silence or else a cleverly concerted campaign of false information and misleading clues, which usually succeeds in putting the inquirers off the scent and concealing all traces of the culprit.

How do they live in this hard world, where the liberal professions alone are unconsidered and underpaid? An apache is never rich. He quickly learns that, to live long, to avoid the eye of the police and the knife of the covetous, it is wiser to boast of empty pockets. A few francs for wine, for the inevitable cigarettes, for his losses at belote or manille; a

little blackmail, a little petty thievery, a hold-up, a share in some minor graft operation, car stealing or tire lifting, free meals and free drinks from an admiring or an intimidated barkeeper, an interest in a low dance-hall — the other needs of life are met easily and cheaply. The hero of a quarter, the bully of a barroom, does not lack friends. All the underworld loves an apache.

In a quarter like Saint-Denis, a strange suburb that is the ghost of a feudal town, to which the mediæval pilgrims came on foot and on horse in their long, thin, picturesque procession strung out over half Europe, the apache is an atavistic projection of Villon. Under the ruins of old fortress walls, on waste lots that cover unconsidered and uncalculated traces of ancient history, he hobnobs now with a riffraff that could not be rivalled in Stamboul itself, or in the Paris of the troubadour and the Court of Miracles. Refugees from the Caucasus, tribes of long-haired and half-clothed savages from Georgia or the Balkans, living in a tribal encampment of tents and hovels, gipsies in their caravans, unpainted yet while spring delays, preparing the winter through for their long annual pilgrimage over the roads of France to the cherry orchards and the vineyards waiting for the spoiler. Among all these ancient peoples, derelicts of civilizations, the apache lurches with his watchful insolence, contemptuous and alien, like a successful younger son revisiting his birthplace. Unaware of his ancient parentage, hostile but unafraid, he watches under

heavy eyelids, under lowering cap, the noisy, tribal preparations of these brown-skinned and stranger peoples, gregarious in their simplicity, they the nomad made captive, he the nomad free.

In their encampments on the dusty edge of Paris, the no-man's land where building speculators have not yet made the ancient wilderness to blossom (rather doubtfully) as the rose, the gipsies and the Arabs, little yellow men from Cochin-China and Annam, opium smokers all; carpet sellers from Algeria, from Poland, Russian car washers, live huddled in that old, immemorial misery of the East. They keep their priests, their joss, their pipe, their race memories, their families, and their fortunes stowed away like household gods in a roll of old matting, of faded rugs. Among them all the apache strides like a Titan — a lean, undersized, sallow-faced figure, hands in pockets, drooping cigarette in mouth, the hero of the dance-hall, swaggering Don Juan of the bal musette, cold and dangerous bully of the bar. He does not know that Paris had not changed. He does not recognize this shifting population of beggars and thieves, the bottommost layer of the underworld. He does not know, and you would not dare to tell him, that his name was Villon once, when the world was young.

The Last of the Boulevardiers

Of a charming man, who recently departed this life, I have heard it frequently said, I have frequently said myself, 'There goes the last of the boulevardiers.'

Those who recalled his easy magnificence, his air of knowing everybody and everything in Paris, his slight, genial swagger, his inimitable suggestion of a large and generous naughtiness, could not find it in their heads to associate him with anything but the great boulevards of the city. Between the Madeleine and the Bastille all of modern civilization, the history of republican politics, the war between religion and secularism, has seen its birth and its apogee, its decline and fall. Modern life and thought have swept like a river through the broad channel that twists through leafy trees between a church and the empty place where once rose a prison. The great ladies, the courtiers, the dramatists, the courtisanes, and the flâneurs of a century have played their historic rôles in that setting, lounging delicately between the restaurant and the café, the card table and the theatre. But the implacable, dingy curtain, Time, has dropped. The play is played out, and the boulevardier is no more. Even he for whom friends too eager in search of an easy epitaph found the description of boulevardier had long since ceased to hold a banner for an army that had left the scene of battle. The gallants who held that last fortress of the France of the nineties, like the Bastille, have perished beneath the onslaughts of a revolutionary mob, and the place is empty in which they were.

In Paris, as elsewhere, life flows westward. The banks and the business houses that once were relegated to their ghetto in the region of the Bourse have

steadily advanced west. One historic café after another has fallen a victim to their rapacious grasp. The Café Anglais has long since gone. Paillard's is sold and soon to be transformed. The Grand Hotel itself, in the very shadow of the opera, is threatened. Viel's farther along the boulevard towards the Madeleine, has fallen and been replaced by a café of marble and silver. There remain only Larue's and the Café Weber, and the immortal, inimitable Maxim's, and when they have gone the way of all flesh, the whole of Paris of the eighteen-nineties will have disappeared.

Something, of course, has taken the place of the old boulevards. What it is nobody yet quite knows. The atmosphere is there. The thing itself is not yet within sight or sound. The modern French playwrights are trying to locate it, to imprison it within a play which shall present to the world the spiritual transformation which Paris has undergone, and with Paris the whole of the youth of France. Whatever the new thing is, it is completely divorced from the leisure, the contemplative attitude, the graceful wit, the delicious egotism, and the frank pleasure in the arts which characterized the old Paris of the boulevards. A hard hedonism has brutally replaced that older attitude toward life. The tempo of the modern Parisian is quicker and the tune louder. The absinthe which the last generation sipped reflectively on its café terraces has been replaced by the cocktails which this generation swallows at the brilliant mahogany

bars of the palaces in the Champs-Élysées. The Frenchman of the nineties wore a silk hat, whiskers on many parts of his face, a green waistcoat, and carried sometimes a goldheaded cane. His successor is clean-shaven, has hair brilliantly sleek with oil, a narrow waist, striped gray trousers, a felt hat, and charlestons as brilliantly and as dangerously as he drives a car, with short, sharp gestures very dangerous to his neighbours. The change emphatically is not for the better.

The very gastronomic habits of the would-be elegant Parisian have changed. The boulevardier took life easily and his meals with long and delicious leisure. He abhorred crowds, he loved conversation, and he never drank alcohol before déjeuner. He was accustomed to eat therefore in the old, dark-panelled, gilt and plush restaurants where there was space between the tables and a cushioned banquette for the languid diner to repose upon in the long digestive periods between courses. He knew the waiters personally, and they knew him. They were men of his generation, habits, tastes, and mentality. Those of them who survive that golden age are aged men with white side whiskers and reddened noses, dull, ruminating, and melancholy eyes. Their generation has died under their feet, like the green carnations and the yellow waistcoats, the barouches and the cabriolets, the night-perambulating amateur detectives of Edgar Allan Poe, the cats like women and the women like tigers of Baudelaire.

But the modern young man has no time for any of that gilded Second Empire nonsense. He has a waistline built for the tango, and therefore dare not linger over long and decorative meals. His food he swallows hastily in the company of motor salesmen in new, gaudy, fake-Norman restaurants near the Porte Maillot, full of bustling cellarmen with no cellars to speak of and waiters with nothing to wait upon except adolescence. He snatches glittering cocktails from Italian bartenders in bars like the lounges of Atlantic liners. He hums all day the refrains of the music with which Tin Pan Alley has overwhelmed the world from China to Peru. To him Cocteau himself is merely one young man like another. He has heard of everybody worth knowing in the arts but has forgotten who they were. He knows nothing about wine except that you can mix everything else, but never champagne. He knows nothing about food except that you can't get anything to eat anywhere any more since the foreigners invaded the town. But he does know an automobile when he sees one, and at the Argentine tango and even the Charleston he is divine.

And that's what the boulevardier has become, and that is why the boulevards have gone west. And that is why Prunier's has opened up a western annex in Passy, and the great stream of life in Paris will henceforth flow — not eastward from the Madeleine to the Bastille, but westward from the Madeleine to the Étoile. For now the Star rises in the West.

Parisians of the Eighteenth Century

Every city has its golden decade. To each has been given one span of years in which life beats at its fullest, a period of maturity not yet touched by decay. Something in the rich stone tints of the town has been called out by an extravagance of colour and of costume, an unwonted splendour in the living parade. The very light has seemed touched by the general excitement of living, full of the dancing reflections of a sparkling age; the light of Constable's landscape, full and serene; of Fragonard and David and Boucher and Chardon.

But if other towns have known their decades, Paris can claim its centuries. Its long history has many facets. Where other cities, like Bruges and Beauvais and Chartres and Rouen and Nancy, have remained in the sleep of the Middle Ages, drugged with the austere beauty of their beginnings, Paris has a window that looks out on every age. In some of its quarters the Renaissance still lingers in dark, neglected corners between two streets flagrant with concrete and brick. It has old houses in which the last revolutionary change was the replacement of a spiral stone staircase of Louis XIII by the flowering ironwork brought into France by the Italians. And if one window looks out on the age of Haussmann and another is fiery with the red skies of Thermidor, some windows still see a Paris mellow with memories of Louis Quinze and not yet filled with the terror and the tumbrils of the last moments of the monarchy.

The eighteenth century has left more traces on modern life than we suppose. In France at least, that age saw the nation at its wittiest, its most intellectual, its most elegant. Anatole France himself owed everything to the eighteenth century. He saw even his favourite classics of the pagan world through the undimmed, mocking, irreverent eyes of that time. And on manners, on habits of life and thought, on gastronomy, on everything perhaps except dress, the brilliant eighteenth century laid its light, imperceptible hand, moulding and perfecting, softening a little the crude colours and bold design of the earlier epochs, and finally rounding off the great legend of French art.

The vulgar brilliance of decoration under Napoleon had not yet dawned, and the dress, the furniture, the tapestries, the painting of the time were still under the influence of the early naturalists. Science was still in its playful beginnings. The horrible uses to which steam might be put had not yet been discovered. Philosophy was not merely the comfort of despair, but the recreation, the sport of wit. The malicious face of Voltaire, thin and wrinkled, appeared impishly in the corners of fashionable salons, and during this incomparable century Brillat-Savarin, the artist and the anatomist of the pleasures of the table, liberated for the benefit of posterity joys which had hitherto been reserved for the secret indulgence of monks and monarchs.

It is to a Paris passionately interested in the revelation of its own past that the Musée Carnavalet,

that delicate and discriminating museum of Parisian relics in the old mansion of Madame de Sévigné, recently offered its Exposition of the Life of Paris in the Eighteenth Century. Life had then become life indoors. The field sports of the fighting kings had vanished, or been relegated to the crude country squires. The music lesson, the mild melody of the spinet and the harp, the luxury of spirited conversation with the greatest wits of the age, the light follies of the dance, the coquetries of the bal masqué, the petit lever and the intimate breakfast, the spectacle of the robing ceremony, the parade of gowns and perfumes, wigs and laces, the hour spent in the shop of the print dealer or the studio of a fashionable painter, the sedan chair, the skating lesson in the Bois de Boulogne — these had become the life of the elegant.

These, and for the women, curiously enough, a sudden caprice for the nobler emotions of the domestic hearth. Maternity, one gathers from the charming and sometimes tender portraits of the period, had actually become a vogue. The rich, high-coloured charms of the Parisian women who sat to Saint Aubin and Fragonard were repeated in the fat, laughing babies who sprawled with devastating effect over all the soft, elegant interiors. The cupids of an earlier day, the chubby loves of the Renaissance, had shed their wings and abandoned their bow and quiver. For the cynical, graceful eighteenth century, with its poses and affectations, its alcoves and satins, was at heart as sentimental as any other.

The very perfume of that period lingers in the vials

and flagons, the fards and rouges, of a Louis Seize coiffeuse which might have been abandoned only yesterday. The old mirror, which once reflected charms so rare, is tarnished now, full of a vague, faint mist, as if Time itself had wished to hang a physical veil between its past and present. But from the faded unguents, the dried pastes and lifeless vials, an odour of musk and amber still faintly rises. In another corner is a strange plaything, a glass bell over a vacuum pump, with which the frail devotees of the new cult of natural science could observe the curious motions of a tiny creature, mouse or field rat, threatened with death by the gradual withdrawal of air from the bell. Another room is transformed as a Louis Seize bedroom, with its high bed and baldachin and embroidered satin curtains, its cushion for the nude foot of the sleeper on her rosy awakening. And the walls of this rare exposition of the great century are gay with the thousand follies and gallantries, the banalities seized by the painter and made humorous or beautiful, the raptures and naïvetés of this age when a whole people for the first time submitted itself to a searching self-analysis and was suddenly on fire with the inextinguishable excitement of living, eager to admire and be admired.

The Last Romantic

In this materialistic age we reach after romance as a young girl reaches after her first party gloves — or did, in the days when there were ballrooms as now there are barrooms, and débutantes wore gloves. And

now, a hundred years after the French Romantics founded a school of writing much less adventurous than their lives, Romanticism has become the craze again. In the Place des Vosges, that marvellous survival of a period which gave Henri Quatre to France, a statue to Paris, Shakespeare to England, a chicken (in theory) to every French housewife's pot, and a headache to subsequent juvenile students of history, the house of Victor Hugo now shelters an exposition of relics and writings, drawings and artistic débris, of the Hugos and the Stendhals, the Balzacs and the Gavarnis, who made another period imperishable.

In another place, and in another style, Paris sees to-day the works of another Romantic, in some ways the greatest of them all. I never come away from the Orangerie in the Tuileries gardens, from the permanent display of gigantic paintings on which old Claude Monet spent the last twenty years of his long, honourable, and industrious life, painting like a hairy god of mythology in his water-garden on the Seine side in Normandy, but with the feeling that the last of the giants was recently among us, that only yesterday we shared with him the same rare and miraculous air, and that the earth is smaller since. Claude Monet was the last of those Romantics who live and move and have their being in a world of sights and sounds so strange, so different from this tangible universe that they are as sprites and elves, creatures of air. He saw the world bathed in colours so delicate that they sank into two senses at once, and music filled his

ears as ecstasy swam in his eyes. The flowers of his garden were reflected in his water brooks and shining pools as stars blossom at the bottom of a deep well. The world about him, sky and trees and river, was to the dreaming eyes of this marvellous old man as to the mystical vision of the poet Vaughan, a world of light.

But if the last of the Romantics is gone, the last of the Bohemians is still with us. On a Boul' Mich' which has changed less in outward manner than most of the landmarks of Bohemia, although the old Café d'Harcourt has gone the way of all flesh and become a grillroom, a dance-hall, and a restaurant for tourists, the venerable, pathetic figure of Jules still strikes the eye like a colour-print of the forties. He might have posed for the Beloved Vagabond. He probably did. As on a wrecked galleon, vestiges of former splendours still cling to the drooping masts. The spare frame is draped in a threadbare redingote; a gold-framed eyeglass hangs proudly from a frayed ribbon; an air of decayed dignity clothes him like a student's cloak.

When Jules was a young man he left a safe but dull job in the prefecture of the Seine to throw himself with ardour into literature, into the arts, into Bohemia. He did not perceive, unfortunately for him, that Bohemia was dying and literature dead. The proud, flamboyant youth of the Romantics had passed. They were old men who desired to have their youth conveniently forgotten. They disliked to see younger men rake up admiringly the disreputable

ashes of their Bohemianism and build with them new fires. And so the mad, romantic Jules, an adventurer out of his time, was stranded high and dry. He had begun to run after the race was over. He knew, it is true, Octave Mirbeau and Jehan Rictus. He knew Claude Monet himself — Monet and Gustave Geoffroy. He knew the apaches who at one period haunted the Latin Quarter, and with a fine air stood drinks and dinners to the starving students and the thirsty poets. He drank with Bibi la Purée, the roi des apaches, when in his careless magnificence that remarkable man and sporting character bought apéritifs for all who came. But long before the war broke out the great Bohemians of his youth were dead or indifferent, dead or half dead, and the lean, half-starved Jules, clinging to his precious thin volumes of youthful verse, stalked the Quarter like a ghost. The war came, and he fought in it, already an old man. The war ended, and he is still here, a ghost that will not be laid.

And we, all our lives, like Jules, are incurably romantic. We shall go therefore to our first Ball at the Opera because it, too, will endeavour to revive the romantic age. In the generation of Nungesser and Lindbergh, the Princess Murat and her Montparnassians are attempting to reconstruct a ball at the Opera exactly a hundred years ago. Napoleon was at Saint-Helena and Walter Scott was writing stories of brigands at an inn in Normandy. Wordsworth lay on his back by a lakeside contemplating

alternately the daffodils and the prospects of immortality. Coleridge was somewhere between Kubla Khan and the ultimate seas of the pole, laying the foundations for other Romantics to build upon. And somewhere in Provence or in western Galway a now ancient crone, smoking peacefully the short clay pipe of an old and peaceful life, herded cows or tended chickens, all unconscious of wars and rumours of war, empires and immortality, the Sacred River or the Ancient Mariner.

But as we climb the great marble staircase at the Opera, past the gold- and silver-braided and brass-helmeted Republican Guards, to the glittering ball-room where the pageant of the past moves and changes and takes on life and colour like Monet's water fountains in the sun, we, too, shall reck no more than the centenarian of Galway or Provence. The courtisanes of to-day have put on the apparel of yesterday. The ministers of the Republic are the same: only their names have changed. A dancing girl still holds a banker in her arms and a poet in her heart. In the crystal cups on the buffet tables the same golden sunlight of Champagne swims and sparkles. Beneath the black mask and below the broad, concealing hat still shine the bright eyes of danger.

Cults and Coteries

Once and again, the despised bourgeoisie, blameless and respectable, sends Art to the mat for the count. The 'Bœuf sur le Toit,' which had long uttered its tropical accents and flaunted its luxuriant

modes, manners, and morals in the rue Boissy d'Anglas, a quarter ordinarily inhabited drearily enough by dressmakers, ambassadors, dyers and cleaners, modistes, antique dealers, furriers, politicians, and mondaines of all the possible worlds, was soon deprived of legal existence in the most legal possible way. Neighbours outraged by noise nocturnally, although supporting it well enough in the daytime from the unappeasable trumpets of the taxicabs, combined to snare and stall the musical Ox. A Paris court gave them its judgment, judicially cast, and the Bœuf sur le Toit, most exotic of the creatures of the night, was condemned. It will make no more the night hideous in the little street between the Madeleine and the Élysée. Its chasseurs, its young men and young women parking their vibrant little cars and vaunting their open exhausts and their open minds, its noise and light and challenge and colour and amusing impudence, have disappeared from the protesting street, evacuating it to the bourgeois, its rightful tenants — the bourgeois and their dry-cleaned, blameless lives.

For a long time, of course, the Bœuf had been condemned. It passed out originally with the Dadaist. It sank in a swirl of strong waters and weak language. Jean Cocteau, who founded it, has long since deserted the orchestra. Auric has long left the piano. The vocal young men of the Six are no longer six, but sixty. Fame dies with such dimensions, for the higher the fewer. A canvas by Picabia, full of the splendour

of isolation but of none other, hung still upon the changing walls. Man Ray still haunted the doomed place, a ghost seeking for other ghosts. Several middle-aged Frenchmen, modern theatre producers and showmen probably by their damp cigars and general dejection, lingered at the last tables, listening to the elderly coloured saxophone player. But the charter members, the young men of the early peace years, the men of that post-belligerent insolence, which we found so captivating for the first five minutes and then tried to ignore, had all departed. Another cabaret of the Parisian intelligentsia, 'Le Grand Écart,' has opened in Montmartre its moderately hospitable doors. Cocteau's second revelation to young mankind is there available, and youth flocks to hear it.

The poor old Bœuf, the stalled ox about to be slaughtered, had therefore counted its days. It was still crowded, although with another crowd. The young men who sat at its bar, like disciples in a mediæval missal, replacing the green carnation of an earlier intellectual epoch by the green menthe frappée which is the sailing-light of this generation, had all roared in their red Bugattis up the hill to Montmartre. Their places were taken by the Anglo-Saxons and the Scandinavians, yellow-haired young men and women out of Maurice Bedel's Goncourt-crowned novel 'Jérôme 60 Latitude Nord,' and Americans out of Hemingway. Cocteau and his coterie had struck their tents and shaken the dust of Egypt from their feet. The place knew them no more.

Every Parisian generation has had its idol, its cult, its shameless idolatry. Verlaine, Alphonse Daudet, Baudelaire, Paul Fort, in their various days led the ball and swept the bar. The Café Procope, the Café Vachette, the Closerie des Lilas, were temples in which young men poured out torrents of eloquence to the Muses and torrents of wine to Bacchus — both libations still welcome in the sight of the gods. Cocteau now enjoys the cult of which the brilliant Greek Moréas was the hero, and of which, perhaps, he died. But there breaks in upon his inspired monologues no such rude interrupter as the river pilot who corrected Baudelaire in the middle of a quotation from Rabelais, and when challenged recited to the astonished and discomfited poet the Third Book of Pantagruel, and then the Second, and finally the Fifth Book, word perfect and unanswerable.

And so the Dadaist and the Surréalists are triumphant, and, Guillaume Apollinaire being dead, Cocteau can have it his own way. A chorus of youthful voices, a little cracked and falsetto possibly, has joined the deep bass of Paul Valéry to drown the praise of Anatole France, and the Red Lily has been poisoned with crême de menthe. In another direction the ineffable Jean Jacques Brousson continues his self-appointed task of painting out France from the literary landscape. His story of his trip with Anatole France to Buenos Ayres is admirably full of pathos and futility. M. Brousson on the second day out

looks at himself in the mirror of his stateroom and sees his face green with mal de mer, although in reality it was merely green with envy.

And so it is perhaps with all the iconoclasts. A king, even dethroned, is still kinglike where his enemies are sometimes less than men. A god, even fallen, has more of humanity, but little less of divinity. France is still Anatole France, though Valéry be forgotten. When the Bœuf sur le Toit and the Grand Écart, twin altars to the folly and the intellectual intolerance of youth, are equally suppressed by the edict of the blameless and long-suffering bourgeois, Anatole France's celebrated rôtisserie of the Reine Pédauque will still be for many people a warm place to abide in, a refuge from the commonplace and from the clamours of Art with an A.

The City of Missing Men

In that rich and sombre drama of Tolstoy's 'The Living Corpse,' of which the Pitoeffs have recently presented a French version in Paris, the character of Fedya is the one that in all fiction and in all drama I never fail to see, draped magnificently in a noble and ineffectual indifference to life, against the moving and coloured background of the Parisian scene.

Of the Parisians of French literature I can fall upon some in typical gestures. Of the tremendous living puppets of Balzac I can trace the steps and hear the speech in the life of modern Paris. The pension of the 'Père Goriot' is to-day a hundred, a thousand pensions of the starved intellectuals and the half-

starved functionaries of the city. I can identify those dreadful daughters. I can recognize in many worn but heroic traits the father on whom Balzac lavished all the ironic pity which he could find in the 'Human Comedy' for men, but of which he could find little or nothing for women. The bony, indomitable features of Colonel Chabert were those of the old officer en retraite whom I saw in a shabby café to-day, writing letters on the familiar gray squared paper with a thin, scratching pen. And the young law clerks in the office of the gallant attorney, full of the terrible and conscious cruelty of youth — their hard eyes and shrill gay whistle may be seen and heard in every street in Paris.

But it is not that. The Fedya of Tolstoy has no outward resemblances to the modern Parisian, gay or weary, oppressed or exalted by the curious business of living. With one of the harassed husbands of the 'Artists' Wives' of whom Alphonse Daudet painted his luminous portrait he has something, perhaps, in common. But his real kindred are not found in literature. They live in that middle world, amid the fiery vapours and the heady visions of which the men of the lost company roam, seeking not death, but oblivion; not death, but the release of death.

The bright world to which the Russian Fedya fled, seeking among the gipsies of the cabarets and their beguiling music an escape from his own dead and chilling life — what was it but Paris? The colours reflected in the mirrored walls of the cabaret as reddened skies in a swift-flowing stream, the sweep of

light on the polished dance floor, the crash of drums and brasses, the long sigh of the strings, the infinite small bubbles beading slowly in the thin glass.

He saw, as Toulouse-Lautrec saw, sitting moodily and forever on the edge of the ballroom at the old Moulin Rouge, his own passions in the provocative, triumphant face of the dancer. The warm gipsy arms around his neck encompassed him like a heady vapour. He was filled with music that drowned his eyes with tears and his soul with a passionate and exalted despair. He had forgotten his own identity. He had buried one man and was about to become another, stronger and more vital, a poet living the strange poem of his own life. And then the cold hands of the corpse that was not yet dead clutched him back into the land of the living. He who had thought he was but one man, and that man dead, found that he was many men, and all of them alive.

Montmartre is full of Fedyas. On the outskirts of the Quarter, on the edge of the fashionable night life, they lead their own nocturnal and secret lives. The birds of prey, male and female, look at them furtively and almost fearfully, and leave them to their mystery and their despair. The habitués of the all-night bars and cafés in which they parade their insolent tragedy give them sometimes a knowing and a wondering look, which would, if it dared, penetrate the heavy mask and plumb the secrets of the unfathomable eyes. The girls of the night, the slim and comradely filles de joie, dart a shrewd and sympa-

thetic glance at the impenetrable figures and soon dismiss them as too familiar figurants in the brief and monotonous frieze of their own lives.

They come to life at midnight, and for that reason, if for no other, their waking hours are spent in the quarter of Paris which knows no sleep. They are respected, if inscrutable, figures to the police, who know only concerning them the unimportant fact that they have no criminal intentions. The Police Commissary, eating with professional appetite his solid supper in a Montmartre restaurant, nods with a familiar and genial air to the man who is dead to the world, if not to himself. There goes, for him, a type that is not yet represented in his interesting museum of abnormality and crime. He scrutinizes his acquaintance with the conscious but contained air of one who will identify him yet among the corpses in the morgue or who, calm and efficient, will one day give instructions to intimidated subordinates in a common hotel room, while on the suicide's bed a cold body lies, and the ashes of burned papers still smoulder on the abandoned hearth.

The Death of Falstaff

In all literature no death is more moving than the death of Falstaff. That a man so prodigious could be brought so low, that a common grave could contain his vast proportions, however shrunken, outraged the reason of his contemporaries. His fall was like Lucifer's, sudden and devastating. He left a sense of emptiness behind him as he passed out, babbling of

little, pitiful things. He left behind him a vast emptiness and a chill of sudden mortality, the sharp memory of a thousand pleasant things shared, of a hearty, youthful lightness, of a tremendous eagerness about cheerful, unimportant causes, like wine and cooking and horses, men and women and their follies, good humour and the joys of hazard, good or evil.

Such a man was an old Parisian who has lately died, in early middle age. He was taken away, like Falstaff, before old age set in like an endless winter. He had known two generations in their prime: the generations which died with the beginning of the war. His later years were but years lived in the brilliant memory of those preceding them. Before disillusion rose like a bitter flood, drowning the past, he was beyond past and present. To mourn him he left neither child nor parent. For his memorial remains but an incompleted book. He has joined the unseen circle of boon companions, men of wit and discretion, of taste and humour, of a wide knowledge and a rare experience, who were once called boulevardiers.

He knew Paris, London, and New York as only an exile in Paris can know them; all three cities in the days which a century hence will be known as their golden age. He was as cognizant with the native dishes of the States of the Union as Mr. Frank Crowninshield, and he could make most of them with his long, delicately tended hands. He could tell a horse a hundred yards away, its name and its pedigree. He knew before the war every maître d'hôtel

in London, Paris, and the French Riviera. He had known Monte Carlo in the days of the grand dukes, when wine ran out in the streets from the floor of the Sporting Club in a thin, golden stream, and for years on end he never saw the sun go down or failed to see it rise.

Ostend when it was full of English sporting peers and their wives from the Gaiety chorus, Ostend when it was full of bearded kings and silk hats; the European spas with their late Victorian clientèle of dowagers and dukes, with Ferdinand of Bulgaria earning a doubtful living as a billiard marker in a second-class hotel, and William of Wied teaching English to young Germans in a pension; Trouville when Deauville had not yet been born, and Biarritz when it was a Basque village — he was an interested, modest, and attentive spectator of them all. The tense faces round the green tables in the gambling-rooms, the characteristics and hazards of the game, the curious hectic life of the players, were an open book in which he could read at will. He had almost a literary passion for all the characters of the human drama, and when he spoke of persons it was as if unconsciously he invested them with a dark fatality, so inevitably they seemed pursued by an intangible influence which he chose to call luck.

He knew Paris of the later years of last century and the early years of this century like no other. The boulevards, that great highway of the Third Republic, an elegant stage for its heroes and its villains, were the main artery of his own life. He sniffed the

mingled scents of the boulevard, and knew it was the spring. When winter came he hid from it comfortably in the brilliant, overheated cafés. He knew the character and the conventions of the great cafés and the great restaurants as he knew his guide to the Turf. He cited the great restaurants — Foyot, Larue, Voisin, Paillard, Lapérouse — as he had, in earlier years, been used to cite the fathers of the Church. They were the gods of his mythology. He had been in the Café Anglais on the memorable night when an English actress, the divinity of her day, ran across the street clad only in her beauty. He had heard the whisper of the boulevards that a duke had broken his neck falling down the stairs of the Maison Dorée. He remembered the patriarchal Leopold of the Belgians drinking beer on the terrace of Fouquet's, and a famous dinner given at Voisin's by a man who had won a race and lost a wager.

And yet this singular man, with his wide and curious knowledge of the world, remained, like Falstaff, simple at heart. He began life with a fortune and ended without it. He was full of superstitions, like the Russian grand duke that he ought to have been born. In him a simple and hearty gourmandise, a love and a knowledge of fine meats and fine wines, took the place of religion. The only other reverence he knew was for the fatality of chance that rules the lives of horses and humans, the chance of the race-course and the gaming-table.

In aspect he was a vast bulk of a man, elegant in trifling things. He had been vaster still, in his happier

years, when the love of the fleshpots was more ardent in him. When the end came his nose, like Falstaff's, was sharp and thin as paper. And, although he died among green fields, he babbled not of them. He saw Maxim's again and the crowded terrace of Weber's; the bright tables of the Maison Dorée and a glittering company; the pesage at Longchamp, full of colour and movement under the high trees. He heard the long sigh of the crowd as the horses swept home, and the clink of glasses at the buffet, and saw the fatal numbers go up on the board. And he knew that the long chain had been paid out. The race had run its course, and the gods of chance, fair or evil, could do no more to him.

X

ROADS OUT OF PARIS

Roads and Inns

THERE is hardly a spring day when the wind blows rufflingly up the river from the southeast but my mind is full of roads and inns. Each road out of Paris leads at one day's end to an inn. Sometimes old and ruined, sometimes new and ambitious, but now and then something resembling the place it was meant to be. Now and then, in a valley where four ways meet, one comes across the warm, splendid shadow of an old country hotel that was once the social centre of the countryside; that is still, in changed and alien times, a charmed and beaconing place. A day's coach-ride from Paris will bring you to the relics of some of them, though not any longer to that inn where Manon Lescaut and her lover trembled, or to another where the Musketeers lay a night, on their mission to save a monarch whose doom the gods had already decreed.

You will not find around Paris any variant of the amusing Tumble Inns and Welcome Inns so frequent on the hard, brilliant, and largely dry roads out of New York. In the days when inn signs were made — in France, as all over Europe — men took their inns seriously. The pun had not yet come into favour. The symbol or sign of the house where man and beast might find, and indeed could exact, refreshment as well as shelter, was generally religious, or heraldic, or

ironic. A place where a gibbet once rose might be remembered on the swinging board on the wall of a country hostel. In all the hunting country, wherever a royal forest once stood, or a republican forest still stands, the sign of the Grand Cerf or the Grand Veneur remains to celebrate the royal venery that once made the glades ring with the sharp music of hound and horn.

The White Horse recurs throughout northern France, as a remnant of Norse mysticism: that white horse whose large, pale limbs are carved in the chalk hills of southern England and may sometimes be divined gleaming whitely through the green on the chalk cliffs of Normandy. Hardly a coaching house, beginning and end of the ancient day's voyaging, but was called the Hôtel de la Poste. The Hôtel de France came into general favour, I fancy, when France became a kingdom. The Hôtel du Commerce probably dates from the Revolution, when many inn signs in general use, honouring the king or the nobility, became heretical. There is no inn in the country, however, that celebrates the heroes of the Revolution. No Hôtel Marat or Robespierre or Danton, outside Paris. Through their jealousy of the metropolis, or indifference to politics, the inns of the countryside bear no tribute to history. Some of them, happily for us, are to-day as though history were not.

Of such is the Bœuf Couronné, the Crowned Ox of Chartres. To see this ancient place against its true

background, free from the intervening sights and sounds of this dispensation, you must come to it on the day of the quarterly horse-fair. Eleven kilometres away, on the high, rolling plain west of Rambouillet, you sight for the first time the great spires and noble frame of the Cathedral of Chartres. Like a landlocked ship, like a vessel of a heavenly armada, the great hulk rides the green ocean. Thereafter, as the object of a pilgrimage, it looms at the end of your journey. But when you reach the town itself the cathedral is lost. Like a hidden thing too large, it rears out of sight. The narrow streets that hem it in, the quiet square in which it stands, are a prison for its protection. You drive around and around, and at long last come upon it, great and yet invisible.

The church found, the market is not far to seek. When I last saw it, it was full of horses. The great, patient, hairy-hoofed Percheron, most beautiful animal outside the Greek mythology. Little dark-haired ponies. Rough brown animals, just plain horses. All of them with hair wild and unkempt, fresh from the bright freedom of the horse farms between Paris and Bordeaux. Round these noble but strangely quiet beasts, bending their proud, patient heads over an oak rail, ranged the wildest company of large, hairy men wearing large, hairy fur coats I have ever seen. They had red, congested, wind-beaten faces and great knobbly canes. The whites of their eyes were veined with red, they breathed heavily, and they looked on their horses with pride, as if they had stolen them. They had all eaten an

enormous, if not unusual, luncheon at the Crowned Ox.

But many as were those that had already eaten, there were still a goodly company of horse-thieves, horse-copers, dealers, buyers, farm stewards, horse doctors, and bailiffs inside the Crowned Ox. The vast, low-ceilinged room was swimming with heated air, partly unappeased appetites, odours of wine and food, the smoke of cigars, and loud, good-humoured conversation. Two waiters ran dexterously and quietly from table to table, bearing fresh viands. It was now one o'clock, and they had been so running since ten. Large, fresh-boiled, country-cured hams, boiled almost to a jelly; sausages from Arles, from Toulouse, from Strasbourg; andouillettes from everywhere, red and white wine flowing into bottles, into glasses, into throats; scallops of veal, cutlets of lamb, entrecôtes of beef, cooked in butter with a little red wine stirred into it; Camembert cheese, apples, omelettes, calvados from brown earthenware pitchers — the great, red-faced, hairy men swallowed them all, not abandoning for a moment their knobbly canes or their dogskin coats.

Buyers came in, touts came in, horsemen came in, wild and gipsylike fellows with unkempt hair and sleepy eyes. The great men at the burdened tables sat on. They had been up with their horses at dawn, staring at the sunrise over the wide, grassy downs. Many miles they had travelled to reach this market-place, and there would not be another fair until the Fair of Lyons, three months hence. They were happy

where they sat, lolling in the great smoke-filled room, dark with memories. They, at least, knew what it was to sit with their fellows in an inn.

The Restoration of the Inn

Poets sing of spring, observes the wistful French gastronome Cussy, but gourmands of autumn. And lo, the gluttonous season is upon us. Wood and field have taken on those deeper, fuller tints only found outside nature in the rich mysteries of the kitchen. Partridge, hare and pheasant, snipe and woodcock are martyred daily, deeming it, doubtless, in the interests of a higher cause, a sweet and proper thing to die. In all creation there is no more affecting sight than the blue spiral of wood-smoke from a house chimney in the green valley soft in evening light. This and the dark, warm interior conjured up in memory, the inn kitchen full of red light on red copper, a dim, high chimney full of hams and sausages and crackling boughs and mysterious implements of iron and brass, a wide, long table of scrubbed oak hollowed and dented with centuries of use, and last, the unforgettable odour of rich meats cooking slowly in butter and sweet herbs. For this is the brief prelude to the winter of our discontent, when the pleasures of the table replace and atone for all other absent pleasures, and one turns avidly to the passionate literature of the kitchen.

The revival of the inn is a sign of the reviving gastronomy of our days. The age of steam, which ruined

our towns with an evil prosperity, destroyed our villages and left the inns derelict, high and often dry upon the abandoned highways. The inn stable, which once sheltered a score or more horses, gaped wide in eloquent testimony to the change and decay of the times. The inn parlour, once the warm refuge of travellers, became a hiding-place for topers. The inn cellars ran dry of wine, but a bar full of bottles and coloured drinks called apéritifs appeared to trap an ignorant generation. The dining-room decayed into a drab and empty place, a lure set for occasional travelling salesmen.

But the age of the automobile has changed all that. It has surprised a France partly industrialized, partly unchanged — as in the northwest and the southwest — since feudalism. It has found once good roads neglected, and bad roads abandoned, and little attempt made to repair either of them, for in many parts of the country heaps of fresh stone by the roadside testify that the roads are paved with good intentions but with little else. The age of the automobile, however, has restored interest in the inn. The old stable has become a garage. The inn, which during the dreadful age of steam transport and steam heat and steam cooking, was rechristened a café-restaurant, has again become an inn. In many cases it is more ambitious still. It is a hostellerie, or — down in Gascony and Provence, where they drop their 'h's' as they drop their garlic into the soup — an ostellerie.

And in some enterprising regions near Paris and in Paris itself the revival, like all revivals, has gone one better than the religion. It has revived inns which never existed. You must blame Anatole France for that, with his inimitable but over-imitated Rôtisserie de la Reine Pédauque. Inside the walls of Paris (those walls that although destroyed yet immure a city which is merely suburban outside their ancient site) there are still inns to be seen. Not in the centre, with its black-beamed, artificial auberges and rôtisseries, its blue-bloused cellarmen recommending sour new wines and dear old ones, its maîtres d'hôtel from Naples or from Nijni-Novgorod. Not even on the boulevards east of the Opéra, where the large, noisy, honest, and inexpensive restaurants of the steam age still nourish and entertain their true Parisian clients, napkins under chin and sitting side by side like judges on the bench. But on the exterior boulevards, and in those vague old quarters like Clignancourt and Clichy, Passy and Auteuil, Belleville and Montrouge, once villages and still villagelike, you will come upon many a faded and authentic inn. By their honest, aged façades, the lettering of their signs, the indications of the stabling and the courtyards that have since disappeared, you may know them for what they were. They offer beds to travellers now, and sorry enough, too. The inn kitchen has gone and they can no longer provide refreshment as well as shelter for man and beast. But in the prevailing sign of the Cheval Blanc — the mystic white horse that waves his white tail on inn signs all over Europe, a

horse that never was on sea or land — you may recognize the remains of one of the old centres of community life in Europe, the humble village inn.

There was a knowledgeable man, Paul Harel, the Norman innkeeper-poet, who kept until recently the inn of the Croix de Saint-André at Echauffour, in the department of the Orne. Paul was a man who could make a sauce as well as he could make a sonnet, and crack a bottle as easily as a jest. He wrote a play once, in his frivolous youth, and it was produced at the Odéon. He knew all the men of his time worth knowing, and they were all poets. Paul Harel lived in that rich age — he died at seventy-three — when if one man called upon another he could be sure there was a pot on the hearth and a chicken in the pot. In his youth a band of young men in love with themselves, with life, with romance, with the wine in the bottle and the cork drawn, could drive furiously all through a night and reach Harel's inn by the morning, and there could find as many songs as they could sing in a long evening, and as many hams hanging from the dark ceiling as would cook in a cask of old Madeira. But they are dead, and Harel is dead, and the road to the inn in the Orne is full of the gasoline chariots of butter-and-egg men rolling in their riches and dyspepsia.

The man who realized that 'gourmandise' had no equivalent in any other language, that neither the Latin 'gula' nor the German 'lusternheit' nor the English 'gluttony' conveys the delicate sense of that tremendous French word, died a hundred years ago

at Belley. Brillat-Savarin, who rediscovered the art of eating and raised the suavity of a glutton's perceptions into a science that was also a philosophy, would have felt almost religiously moved, I think, by the enthusiasm aroused by his memory and his achievements a century after his death. It is possible, even probable, that not a single great dish, not a monumental chef d'œuvre of the art of the kitchen, has been invented since his time. Cooking has not even stood still, it has retreated. The infinite variety of the country's resources, save in the matter of game, has probably increased. But where are the young men who, instead of aspiring to honours in literature or in the law, in arts, in politics, or in finance, say piously to their elders: 'Where is mine enemy, that I may show him how to cook?'

The Road to Avignon

The road southward from Lyons, the handsome city of the silk weavers, full of bridges and mist, rises sharply over a long ridge of hills and does not rejoin the wide and dark waters of the Rhone until Vienne, with its frowning mountainside dwarfing the town, and its red-hooded spahis ludicrously like gasoline pumps in colour and outline. An hour away in Valence, the first city of the south, and palms and olives and orange trees begin to relieve the whitening landscape and dark hills cleave the beaconing sky. Two hours farther south the granite turns to sandstone and the characteristic sanguine earth of Provence gleams warmly like a new stage scene under the blue

sky and glistening air. The hills stand stiffly into the crystal air like ribs of cardboard, and a mile away you see a hawk wheel high up in the heavens and then drop shatteringly as a stone. The road rises and falls, rises again, plunges over the magical landscape like an irresistible destiny, and then, through two slow miles of dust and heat, of labouring wagons and the patience of heavy oxen, fetches up at last at the strange symmetrical pattern of the wall of Avignon.

Two civilizations ended there; the Roman, and the Greek before the Roman; and others, older still, possibly before either of them. Even now the frontiers of France and the frontiers of Christendom seem to end at its gates. If it had not been a papal city it would have been a pagan city, and even the palace of the popes and the high Gothic tower of the popes have something pagan about them. Like a fortress in some lost city of the Asian desert — a fortress to a secret faith — they rise over the huddled roofs of the little town more like a tower than a temple.

No sworded priest of the Chinese, no hooded lama, high in his Tibetan tower, could have been more aloof or more exalted than the popes of Avignon in their chamber above the white castle. From their narrow windows the last popes could see the white stone bridge which, broken now, is still more famous than any bridge in the world, the 'pont d'Avignon' on which in their daydreams French children dance until dreaming is over. They could see the hill of the hermitage of the monk Peter, founder of the Crusades — a hill dark with vines and celebrated still — and

even across the turbulent river the house of Petrarch.

The stairs concealed in the hollow walls of the marvellous palace still echo to ghostly footsteps, and if you stand in the wide empty place in front of it on a night of full moon the strange serrated shadows cast by the high walls seem to be full of moving shapes as if the popes themselves lived again in it. Their pastimes are recorded vividly enough in the frescoes still visible on some walls of the palace. Scenes of deer-coursing, long-haired young pages netting fish in a stream, a ball game. These, cheek by jowl with pictured incidents from the gospels, painted on the bare walls when the mortar, like the mind of man, was still fresh, in a world where the marvellous white flower of Gothic art had just opened and the popes' own apartment in the Tour des Anges rose literally to the angels.

Through these majestic ruins stalks before you a guide with a grizzled martial head like Foch's and a poet's memory for the lines of Petrarch.

For every Provençal is a poet at heart, and not in vain did Mistral revive the soft, singing language of this southern country. Every Romanesque city that he loved has its statue to him, proud and sturdy in the tree-shaded square, and the hearts of his countrymen are still full of his singing as their eyes, even in absence, never leave the dark Provençal frieze of rose and cypress, the dying sun and the tree of death.

Between Paris and Avignon the inns are many but the cooks are few. A round-bellied innkeeper at

Sens, whose performance is as good as his promise; a once famous hotel at Beaulieu from which the household gods and the glory have departed to a rival establishment at Macon, that sprawling city of casks and cellars on the wide Saône; a celebrated widow, the Mère Fillioux, at Lyons, and the Restaurant Bellecour in the old square of the same name in the heart of the city, a restaurant frequented by the wise, cultivated, gluttonous, but economical bourgeoisie of Lyons and conducted by an ardent, rather dashing young maître d'hôtel whose ambitions spring already to the summits of gastronomic celebrity. After Lyons nothing but gloom in the hotel dining-rooms of the mountain fastness of Vienne, but the first delicate hints of garlic at Valence and at Avignon the full flavour, the rich and lasting fragrance.

Where the nightingales sing over the grave of Petrarch a wine is made that still bears the name of Pope John XXII. The wine called after the new castle of the popes also comes from this region, and so does the rose-red Tavel, that harsh, heady wine of the Rhone, smelling of flowers. All these wines and many others, some famous, some unfamiliar, I found on the card of a little restaurant in Avignon, rather openly boasting on its menu of the taxi rank outside. I found there also a bouillabaisse, not the vague mess of fish that passes for it outside of Marseilles, but firm and white sections of the noble loup de mer and the mullet of the Mediterranean sitting calmly in a saffron sea. And then a small, thin beefsteak dipped dazzlingly for a moment in boiling butter and green

herbs and eaten breathlessly. And a small unclouded white wine of the country — a wine anonymous and ice-cold, like the snow on the crests of the wine-red hills and the green torrents that rush down from them — to flow at last under Avignon's broken bridge.

The Road of the Romans

Wherever the Romans went they carried with them their civilization. The art of living, raised by them to the highest point yet reached in the history of the world, they applied methodically to their conquests. The ultimate territories into which marched the Roman Légionnaires, the lands of the barbarian and the Gaul, became cultural suburbs of the great city of the Tiber. Pleasant hillsides in France and Britain were covered with the villas of week-ending, commuting traders or centurions. A temple to Venus, or Diana, or another of the agreeable deities who watched over the stern duties or elegant pleasures of the immortal Roman, raised its white columns, its austere and beautiful friezes, its symmetry unmatched and unmatchable by any later architect, under the pale, northern skies. Each new-built Roman city had its temple, its theatre, its forum, its arena, and its bath. In France, at least, no such plumbing had ever been seen before the Roman invasion, nor generally repeated since.

In Paris, the Cluny museum, the Catacombs, and the vaguely outlined remnant of the ancient amphitheatre of the Roman Lutetia are all that remain of

that splendid occupation. The blackened walls of Cluny, several Roman pavements in mosaic, bright as if laid yesterday, and a quantity of columns and statues filched from other Roman monuments throughout the country seem a poor enough reminder, under this bleak and wistful Parisian sky, of the brilliant, blazing sun of pagan art. The thin tracery of Christian architecture, flowering delicately in white stone or coloured glass, and sending its audacious shoots and tendrils, its leaves and stalks and petals out tremblingly into the pearly air, has obscured the earlier, sturdier, more defiant art. In Paris, therefore, the remains of Rome are tomblike, immobilized by death.

To see them alive, taking on the colour and the vestige of immortality, you must see them in Provence. The sun-bleached cities of southern France, on a plain on which the slow ox-wagons still raise the dust a Cæsar's legions raised, a plain against which the dark cypress and the poplar, most beautiful and most melancholy of trees, lean their tall, proud outlines, are still, in essence, the cities that the Romans built. Dig down to their foundations and they were laid by Roman hands, or at least surveyed by a dark Roman eye. Look but at their door lintels, at their windows, at the great cornerstone which in the narrow street protects the building from wagon wheel or stumbling ox. They are Roman still. The round arch, the only round thing in that beautiful, uncomplicated, austere world where the earth was flat, the arch before its curve collapsed into the monastic

spearhead of the Gothic — is not that Roman? And that frieze high up under the roof eaves? And that flowered capital, broken from a Roman column?

Standing in the little tree-filled square at Arles, in the shadow of the statue to the poet Mistral, that sturdy, passionate Provençal who strove to restore the Roman past of these cities, you can see, distant but a boy's leap, two massive columns and a portion of the portico of the ancient forum. The town is almost now as the Romans left it. All the life of the place is concentrated in this tiny square. The men of Arles lounge all day, disputing languidly and drinking heroically, on the terraces of the cafés that fill three sides of it. The Arlésiennes, whose celebrated beauty, Greek and Roman and Phœnician in one, has survived even the onslaughts of this unromantic age, but whose classic, free-flowing draperies have disappeared before the short skirt, still gaze across, in the evening, the wide river less troubled than the Tiber. They see the swallows wheel in the dying light and the black cypress blacker than jet against a sky grown sapphire blue. And perhaps in their hearts there rises some of the slow, Provençal fire, that troubled exaltation which haunts, as it haunted Mistral, all poets of a dying race.

On the edge of the town, after a maze of narrow streets and blank, eyeless Roman or Romanesque houses, one stumbles upon the amphitheatre. Gigantic, immobile, undisturbed by time, it rises as the most tremendous monument to the genius of a great

age. Arch upon arch, column after column, it has endured nearly two thousand years and will endure two thousand more. The strange, disturbing miracle is that it is, to this day, put to its ancient uses. Twenty-five thousand people on feast days crowd into its stone tiers and under the wide, infinite dome of the Provençal heaven, watch with noisy interest the classic Cæsarian combat of man and beast. On the floor of the arena the watchful bull still paws the hot sand. The flash of a red cloak, the incredibly quick rush of the bull, fill suddenly all that vast white stage with the age-old electric excitement of the drama. And in this collective emotion the curtain of the centuries is lifted, deep calls to deep, and a crowd of the twentieth century finds itself lost in the remote personality of a Roman-Gallo-Græco-Phœnician mob of the first century after Christ, when, even as now, bread and circuses were the universal panacea.

Astonishing as a slumbering giant among pygmies, the amphitheatre at Arles appears among the huddle of dwelling-houses at its feet. No less moving, though in greater ruin, is the antique theatre. Here perhaps these Roman exiles, soldiers and colonists, listened with the old melancholy of the exile, charged with proud memories of the country for which it was so sweet and honourable to die. Here they heard, perhaps for the first time, the tragedies of the Greeks, themselves a people who had passed by grandeur and were now in decadence, so that the dust blew unheeded over the Attic plain and the forgotten graves of the dead at Thermopylæ. And here in this roof-

less ruin, open to the south wind and the moon and sun, two white columns stand, fragments of a beauty moving and terrible in their loneliness as the frail verses of the Greek anthology.

The Road of the Vert Galant

I never cross the Pont Neuf, that wide white bridge which divides all of new Paris from almost all of old Paris, the Pont Neuf with its bold equestrian statue of Henri Quatre looking from his great stone horse across the city that was well 'worth a mass,' without thinking that if I had been a monarchist he was the kind of king I would have liked. I am writing this from a town in the Pyrenees, the town in which Henry the Fourth was born. His cradle, an entire turtle-shell, is the only trivial, ridiculous thing in all the enormous background, stern and beautiful, of the life to which he was born. His battle flags still hang, white and gold, from the gilt spears that with his gilded helmet garnish the dark corner of his birth chamber. Since I left Paris on a somewhat desultory journey across France, I had seen nothing but the bold, warrior-like effigy of the king who remains to this day — to all royalist Frenchmen, even to all republicans — a grander monarch even than the Grand Monarque himself — handsome, simple, soldierlike Henry of Navarre, the King Hal of France.

He died young, I see from the history that is better learned from pictures than from books, and better learned from landscapes than from either. He died

young, in the brilliant fullness of his days, a great, generous man, wept over by his friends. His death at the hands of an assassin has become a poem that moves painters like the death of the heroes of Homer, and in the little, crowded, heroic museum of Pau, his birthplace, he takes his rank and place among the Greeks — Demosthenes the orator, a soldier and man of the people; Apollo, than whom he was in youth not much less fair, and Socrates the philosopher, who also died through the unwatchfulness of his friends.

In appearance half-god, half-satyr, Henri Quatre suggests to the irreverent a sixteenth-century Landru. His portraits and busts bear a marked resemblance to that brilliant, unfortunate man, too much married. In a remarkable modern picture which shows him looking down over Paris from a window in the tower of the Church of Saint-Germain des Prés, his mobile, fascinating face, rich and curious, is that of a young Mephistopheles. Over all his epoch, one overshadowed in Europe outside France by the dark, nebulous ambitions of Philip the Second of Spain and Elizabeth of England, Henri Quatre threw his gay pre-cavalier cloak. I can hear his round, tumbling speech in the speech of the Béarnais to-day. They are a smaller people than their erstwhile king. From the life-size posthumous statue made of him in the reign of Louis XIV, his head and curled Don Quixotic beard must have towered above them. Even in death he was a magnificent man. His corpse, exhumed nearly two centuries later, was that of a handsome, vigorous figure, muscular, with great ribs

and arms and hair still curling over his head and chin.

You will see the mark of the great Henry on all or most of the castles of Touraine. His arms, or those of François Premier, are blazoned above many handsome chimney-pieces in the Valley of the Loire. The salamander of François, or the three lilies of France joined to the linked chain of Navarre, are repeated in every pattern of the magnificent ceilings and walls of the châteaux that are more royal than any kingdom in Christendom. For the rest, these works of beauty and genius are mainly dedicated to the personalities of one or other of the three great women of France of the Renaissance — Diane de Poitiers, Catherine de Medici, and Marguerite de Valois. Their faces — bland or baneful, watchful or indifferent — look down from a hundred canvases. Their lives, the royal passion, the jealousy of rivals, are reflected in every corner of the vast, dark rooms, the still gilded, lily-emblazoned ceiling, the oak-shuttered windows. Chenonceaux, Blois, Chaumont, Amboise, Azay-le-Rideau, are like the same story told differently. The bridge is broken, but the waters of the passionate pageant of history still flow by. It is a dark river, moving slowly to a mysterious and distant sea.

From the vulgar opulence of Biarritz, full of white Spanish villas and black Basque berets, Hispano-Suizas and Spanish accents originally acquired in Brooklyn, my memories go back to a meal eaten in

Périgueux and to a house in Touraine. The Valley of the Dordogne is full of thin-turreted castles — like the castles on the Rhine, only more human — and the forests are full of terribly tortured, gastronomically trained hogs hunting for truffles. The result is that in one of the innumerable excellent Hôtels de France or Hôtels de la Poste that haunt this country you can drink a wine like Château l'Evêque, grown in the vineyards of the former Bishops of Périgord, and eat foie gras aux truffes and omelettes aux truffes until, like the admirable truffle itself, you are black in the face. And after the meal a landlord with the gurgling voice of the country pours out for you from a large curious flat flask, round and fat and heavy, the eau de vie of the lost city of Armagnac, buried forever beneath the voluminous publicity of its rival brandy-distilling city of Cognac.

The house in Touraine was a large stone house upon a hill, near Saché, on the River Cher. Built by a crazy architect six centuries ago, its long, sloping roof began high and finished low, without pattern and formless. A long, graceful parkland ran in front of it to a hollow where an unseen stream murmured under willows. The black windows of the house looked like sightless eyes.

We entered through a great stone doorway, the stone lintel heavily sculptured. Before us the flagged stairway rose between walls hung strangely with incredible things. Early Victorian chromos, porcelain bénitiers, and useless objects of wax and glass lit-

tered the walls of the staircase and the high, blank, stone-tiled rooms. The house, strange and impressive, incredibly old and mysterious and forbidding, was filled with the furniture of a dead and forgotten family, a kind of Swiss Family Robinson. The record of their banal, simple, bourgeois lives was spread before us here, in this fourteenth-century house, looking out on a valley of beauty. Their vanities, their complete lack of taste, their terrible trivialities, peopled the great house like ghostly presences. They were unescapable in death, like memories of a melancholy childhood. And then, up the steep Louis Treize staircase of spiral stone steps, beautiful in its simplicity, we were shown into another chamber, inhabited like the rest by Victorian horrors.

In an alcove was a clumsy, unsubstantial wooden bed, made as though to be slept in that night. An oil lamp, eighty years old, stood on a little table near. In the corner was a rosewood and leather chair, the only human thing in the room, and opposite, a large, worn, oak writing-table, made evidently by a village carpenter. It bore an old-fashioned guillotine for cutting paper and an inkstand in which the ink seemed hardly dry. At it, we were told by an apple-cheeked little old woman, Monsieur de Balzac had written 'Père Goriot' — speaking of him as if he were alive and still living in these parts and mispronouncing the title quaintly, 'Père Gloréole' — as if he wore a halo. And through the low window in the upper chamber of this strange house, she told

us, Balzac could see, looking across the valley, the house in which a beautiful Polish girl lived, and at a window could distinguish, peering earnestly, the girl herself.

We looked through the window, still full of the eerie influence of the place, and it was not difficult to believe that we would ourselves perceive, among that green, overgrown valley, shadowed by this haunted mansion, the shadow of the girl who was the lily in his magical, unhappy story, 'Le Lys dans la Vallée.'

The Road of the Lionheart

He was, by all accounts, a big fellow. To have earned a sobriquet like that in an age which was not above giving a dog a bad name and hanging him meant that he was of no mean quality. Many men feared him, not least his brother John. One, if legend does not lie, loved him more dearly than life. Like his great-grandfather William, he loved his duchy of Normandy better than his kingdom of England, and he loved fighting better than either. He had no especial piety in religion, but he swung his two-edged sword and his heavy battle-ax, that none other could lift, mightily against the one in the cause of the other. He probably found the Turk a better fighter and heartier sportsman than the heavy Norman or English dukes of those days. There is a charming story in Scott of a trial in swordsmanship between a Saracen monarch and the Lionheart during one of the pleasant armistices on the plain before Jerusalem when most of the rival Christian captains, like the Greeks

before Troy, were sulking in their tent. Not the Saracen, at all events, was to prove Richard's mortal enemy. The petulant Austrian duke, perhaps, piqued in his pride. Or, first and last, Richard's own too-confident humour, barbed in insolence, the truculent, heedless temper of the warrior.

He returned from the Crusades embittered. Delivered he was at last from the Austrian duke's dungeon, for he had always a quick ear for a tune, and the loyal Blondel sang truly. But he had lost his cause, the affections of his wife, and the tolerance of his liegemen. His first task was to trounce his traitorous brother John, which he did insufficiently. His second (in which he was strangely modern), to borrow money. His third, to build him a castle in Normandy to save that duchy from the marauding French. The castle's ruin stands to-day but two hours down the Seine from Paris, halfway between Paris and the sea.

The Château Gaillard at Petit Andely, even in its ruined state, is the finest example of a Norman fortress extant. It breaks from the chalk cliffs like an outcropping of white stone, solid and sturdy and still defiant of time. Impregnable on the water side, rising sheer from the sheer rock face, and strongly defended in the rear, it could be taken like Richard's own proud soul, only by subterfuge. An arrow from the air, or an adder creeping in the earth, or a strong tide in the waters. The snake and the tempest he escaped, or mastered, but the arrow discovered him in the end.

When he fell the age of chivalry had flowered. Its petals were already fluttering in the wind.

From the highest window of Richard's keep you can now see a spectacle hardly changed in eight hundred years. In the arched embrasure, cut in a five-foot wall, with its beautiful pre-Gothic arch as strong, as simple, and as solid as if it were built yesterday, although masonry is crumbling all around it, you may sit on the stone seat where the Lionheart brooded over the fall of his fortunes, and look across the sparkling plain to the chalk hills beyond. You will still see, as Richard saw, the wide river sweeping round against the hills — the river with its tree-covered islands huddled motionless like sheep; the green, unchanging hills, their white heart of chalk carved in places in bold relief — hills and great patches of forest, green and brown, Édouard Herriot's authentic Norman forest. In the green meadows below, flooded in the spring by the bursting river, brown-and-white cows are grazing as their ancestors grazed when no French spear or crossbow darkened the horizon. In the village a high, dark-timbered mill rises at the angle of a narrow stream rushing down from the hills to meet the river. Its oaken beams were fresh-hewn then, gleaming in the new plaster. They are gray or black now.

Pacing his high room in the now roofless donjon, with its three giant windows blue and white with sky, Richard could see the feathered spire of a new church rising; a spire like the tip of an English arrow, and a church with stone buttresses strangely like an

arrow's feathers. The church is still there, a gray perpetual foreground for many landscape painters from Nicolas Poussin to our own times. The square in which it stands is every summer the green frame for a Norman fête. And from it rose, just one hundred and seventy years before Lindbergh, the incredible aviator Blanchard, to fly across the English channel in his hot-air balloon — a silken fabric, a brazier of hot coals beneath it, and this superb imbecile adventurer, trusting to the winds to blow hot, but never to blow cold.

The dark, tumultuous Richard has been dead since 1192. The Norman peasants, although they bear names that seem strangely English until one remembers that most of England is strangely Norman, go unmoved about the tasks that their ancestors performed, cursing as likely as not, at the English occupation of Normandy only a few years after the English had been cursing at the Norman occupation of England. Yet Richard's men built their steep, brown-roofed houses and their twisting, narrow streets. Richard's own moody eye, dark and turbulent now as it had once been bright and eager, had been bent upon the building. The gaze that had seen Jerusalem taken from the infidel, after the long years that the locust had eaten in the Syrian desert, looked down now, with the wonder of the returned warrior, upon the green hills and valley, the river bright like silver in the plain and the white tower rising on the hill. 'How fair she is,' he exclaimed admiringly upon the

completion of the castle, 'my daughter of one year!' When the dark arrow fell from heaven his white tower had stood three years. It is still beautiful, after eight centuries — this only child of the warrior.

The Road to Lourdes

No beautiful city, still more no ancient city, is without its inequalities. Paris is agreeably full of a number of things which would ruin most towns. It has slums, cinemas, a slow-moving methodical metro which fills the earth with noise and tobaccoless stale air, very many good writers writing for very many bad newspapers, very fast-moving and on the whole honest if avaricious taxi drivers, a large foreign population chiefly engaged in occupations of leisure, and one elderly and not very active anti-alcohol league. Besides the healthy and elevating quarter of Montmartre, chiefly represented to visitors by one establishment in one street, Paris contains a number of sections many of which are strangely free from picturesqueness, local colour, charming apaches, or crimes of passion.

The ancient fortifications themselves, once the happy hunting-ground of Dudu the Bull, and the untamable but faithful Nini, are almost entirely destroyed. Their site is rapidly being filled by large white apartment buildings. The old quarter of the Temple, once the thieves' kitchen of Paris, where the beggars of the city kept royal estate in the Court of Miracles, is now an impeccable business section, and only the religion of the inhabitants of the quarter has

not changed since Solomon's time. Then, there are the dreary sections of Grenelle and Glacière, built by bores or madmen, and overrun by the stone-pillared feet of the elevated railway. Grenelle is full of cement factories and pensioned officials and tired cyclists from the six-day bicycle race in the adjoining Velodrome d'Hiver. And the Glacière section can boast only of the great gray prison of the Santé, from which a Royalist's or a Communist's occasional enlargement causes a momentary local flutter of excitement.

There is Belleville, too, where once the high, narrow streets were full of Communards and guns and barricades. Only the shrill, one-track tramway car survives from that time to trouble the small bourgeois respectability of a dull quarter with memories of its fiery, historic past. And then the quiet, colourless streets back of the Gare de l'Est, full of Alsatian restaurants, and occasional sunset flares over the engine shops in the valley, and the nostalgic odour of garlic. There is nothing to tease an honest householder's conscience. Nothing reflects the lively Gallic mind or the inexorable Latin art of living in those righteous small-town streets, those houses full of dull, useful energies in repose. They are, however, the background of Paris, that vague, immense, neutral-tinted domain from which emerge, at eventide or on dominical and other festive occasions, the troubled Parisian and his family, all agog to see and to hear the sights and sounds of the curious capital in which, it would appear, they live.

Halfway between this dim background and the incalculable sum of noises and perfumes and sights and sensations which is Paris to you and to me and to the provincial Frenchman; halfway also between this century and another, considerably earlier, stands the old priest-haunted, incense-clouded quarter of Saint-Sulpice. Church and square, they survive from another cycle in history. From the power of the kings, from the earlier and greater power of the Church. A secret passage, running from the palace of the Louvre under the river to a crypt in Saint-Sulpice, once connected both powers, temporal and spiritual, in a pact valuable in adversity. I am never made aware of the proximity of Saint-Sulpice by the profusion in the shop windows of large white candles and heavy gold vestments without recalling some of the emotion Balzac evidently felt in writing his true story of the great sceptic and the pious Auvergnat water carrier in 'The Atheist's Mass.'

And in another place recently, under a hot sun in a mountain valley full of dust, I was reminded again of this place, the heavy, shadowed door, the echoing, empty church, and the furtive agnostic. It was at Lourdes on the second day of the first great pilgrimage of the year. The road from Pau had followed a green mountain torrent, past little inns with white-napkined travellers dining satisfactorily in the deep shade of sycamores, past a rival shrine of miraculous water set incongruously in juxtaposition with an example of local plumbing. The dark, handsome profile of the Pyrenees spread across the landscape on our right,

accompanying our thoughts and actions with large and beautiful gestures signifying human mortality. At the head of the valley, in the shadow of the towering dark heads of the hills older than man, we came suddenly upon the Coney Island town, the pretentious white basilica, the spire and grotto, the gushing water and candles and healing shrine of Lourdes. It was a brilliant hot day and under the metallic sky a thousand bare-headed people, sick and well, chanted fervent responses while a brown and bearded priest high up over the crowd, in a pulpit set against the dark, rocky mouth of the grotto where the peasant girl Bernadette had her vision, preached passionately and with conviction like a preaching friar of the Crusades.

The Great Inns of France

A good restaurant may not always be known by the variety of its menu, nor even, in France at least, by the quality of its table linen, as bears witness the redoubtable inn of the horse dealers at Chartres. Two things are chiefly needed to make a restaurant — a fat cook and a shining arsenal of copper pans. The rest will follow with fatal precision. As for the other characteristics of the good inn — beware of the bright and sparkling dining-room full of cut flowers in bright glass, and little tables on a yellow hardwood floor. It is a snare and a delusion in France, where the austere lightness and cleanness of a Swiss mountain pension, when found, are usually accompanied by cooking inferior even to Swiss in quality.

No guide-book to the gastronomy of France yet

mentions the famous inn at Thoiry, where Aristide Briand and Gustave Stresemann met for luncheon on a celebrated occasion, yet for years the gourmands of this region of Savoy had frequented the little village under the mountains, to eat the mountain trout, the pâté de lièvre, the poularde Savoyarde, served to them by several generations of innkeepers. Ask any traveller to name you offhand the great inns of France, and after half a dozen he will falter. Those in the great category are few; and when one comes to name those in the second there is little to choose between them in character, quality, and cost.

For a long time I held that there was no better restaurant in France than the Hôtel de la Couronne, in the old market-place at Rouen, where Joan of Arc was burned. The low-raftered, pleasant dining-room of this magnificent inn, with its wide chimney, its fire of apple boughs over which the chickens and the partridges turn slowly on the long spit, sizzling under their golden coat of Normandy butter, is one of the most agreeable in France. There you may eat the authentic sole of Dieppe in its true manner. There, of a Sunday, the city councillors of Rouen, with their wives and children and grandchildren, sit quietly among the buzzing Parisians and their talk of roads and automobiles and wait with that repressed ardour, that terrible patience of the glutton, until an odour of wine, of old brandy, of browning flesh, of an alcohol lamp, of butter and herbs, and of blood announces to their distended nostrils the arrival of the celebrated

canard à la rouennaise, the duck which is to Rouen what goose liver is to Strasbourg and truffles to Périgord.

But now, I find, there is an even better inn forty miles away, and this I will say boldly, and even fanatically, is the greatest inn in France. At the junction of the long rolling road between Amiens and Le Havre, in the village of Tôtes, stands the Hôtel du Cygne. It was built in 1611, and nine years later it sheltered Dumas's famous musketeer, D'Artagnan, escorting his master, Louis XIII, to Dieppe. A century and a half later Mme. de Pompadour dined at the inn and graciously secured for its keeper from Louis XV the privileges of a royal posthouse. In 1808 the great Napoleon consumed a restless meal there, between two journeys, and more recently it has entertained De Maupassant, Flaubert, and the Prince of Wales.

The Hôtel du Cygne, in the lovely village on the swelling Normandy plain in which De Maupassant wrote his unforgettable 'Boule de Suif,' and also that terrible little story of the girl who threw herself from a window for too much love, has as its most glorious feature an enormous, high, raftered kitchen through which one enters the house, and which is its largest room. On the walls, among a shining but more recently used collection of brass and copper utensils, hangs a copper marmite, or stewpan, presented to a former proprietor of the house by Napoleon, which suggests that the great Emperor was not insensible to the subtle flattery of French cooking.

The other great restaurants of the country may be counted on the fingers of one hand. There is that of the Mère Fillioux, at Lyons, which according to Henri Béraud is but slightly superior to twenty others in the same town. There is the Hôtel des Postes et du Commerce, at Périgueux, in which I once ate the finest pâté de foie gras I ever knew. There is a little bistro in Jurançon, near Pau, celebrated for its cooking and its wines, although I forget, or never knew, the name of the woman who keeps it. In Marseilles, the home of all that fragrant, spicy cooking of the Mediterranean coast, there is the immortal Pascal, whose bouillabaisse is sung in every port from China to Peru. There is the Escargot d'Or, at Bourges, kept by a man who was formerly Lord Bertie's chef at the British Embassy in Paris. There is the Côte d'Or at Saulieu, kept by a Frenchman who used to be chef to the Kaiser. At Mont Saint-Michel, on the flanks of the grim rock that stands out into the setting sun, there is the famous Croix Blanche, where they once made the finest omelette in the world. At Belley, down in the rich province of Bresse, which gives France its plumpest chickens and gave Brillat-Savarin to the world, there is the Hôtel Pernollet. And there is the Hôtel du Méridien, at Val de la Haye, between Rouen and La Bouille, kept by a man who admirably combines the two professions of innkeeping and painting, both great arts which have been ruined by the modern touch.

XI

PARIS IN PROFILE

Fairs and Circuses

How far removed in destiny from the lion of a drawing-room is the lion of a fair! The phenomenon of nature (for he is no tawny beast of the African forest, this shrinking denizen of the canvas booth) belongs to the queer no-man's land between the animal and the human creation, the wistful menagerie of men who are not quite men. The male creatures with leonine manes and muttering roar for speech, less human than men and less human even than the beasts, with animal features but not animal appetites — how singular is their lot, inarticulate among these strange European peoples among whom they have wandered, from their birthplace in a half-Asiatic village.

The fairs of Western Europe are full of them. The dog-faced man, the lion-headed man, the elephant-man. And at the other end of the scale, but morally not remote, the two-headed calf, the six-legged lamb. They share the extreme heights of popular success with the fat lady and the skeleton man, the juggler and the fakir. But they alone are unaware of their singularity, of their power to draw silent and almost hysterical crowds under the hissing blue or yellow flares.

Behind the humane barrier of inhumanity which

The Old Iron Fair

walls them in as in a prison from fellow-consciousness with all mankind, the men who are less than men gaze through their vague eyes at the blurred colours and movements of a life that they have never known but within the canvas frontiers of a fair. With their bowed heads, sunk as if in a dumb shame at their physical difference from the crowd around them, they seem to indicate a terrible resignation to all that a tragic biological destiny has condemned them to, an equal indifference to all that they have been spared.

The human phenomena are still the strongest drawing-card of the French fairs. Even the waxwork museum, with its Grand Guignolesque collection of horrors, its representations of a corpulent Marat stabbed in his bath by a wax Corday, and other political and moral allegories hardly less gruesome, pales in human interest when weighed against the giants and the dwarfs of our modern fairy tale.

The very survival of the street fairs in Paris is perhaps its greatest link with the Middle Ages. Beneath its hard and modern brilliance, the commercial efficiency which it is slowly learning from other countries, the youthful reaction against the habits and the décor of the last few centuries, Paris is still the city of the perfumers and the pilgrims, and the goldbeaters and the travelling fairs. The little stone goblins of Notre Dame still grin down upon a city of small crafts and public pleasures, the town of a people nourished, like all peoples, largely by bread and circuses.

The Foire de Neuilly, which every summer lines

the broad avenue from the Porte Maillot to the Seine, needs no elaborate system of paid publicity to attract to its booths and swings and merry-go-rounds the ingenuous sons and daughters of a people not too old and tired to laugh at simple things. The merry-go-round itself has changed since the days when it stood for a Puritan critic of the world and its sad joys as the apotheosis of worldly pleasure. It has, in France at least, borrowed from the sharp lessons of the allegorist and become a whirling satire on public life and habits. The stolid wooden domestic animals, horses and cattle, on which the callow youth of Victorian days rode wildly to perdition, drunken with the heady music of the fair, the glaring lights and brassy noises, the smoke rising steadily like the smoke of the burning cities in the plain, have largely disappeared. You ride now on a little pantomime group which pointedly satirises the evils of the day. A white-coated baker with an empty tray indicates the rising cost of bread: and you, the willing accomplice in this piece of political pantomime, sit on the tray as a saddle. The old stolid steeds, the giraffes and zebras and bulls and horses, have gone the way of all flesh. The merry-go-round has become a moral, and each rider points the parable of his own folly.

The famous circuses, with the exception of the Nouveau Cirque, have resisted valiantly against the tide of mechanical music and mammoth spectacles. On the Boulevard Rochechouart, against a faintly dated background of old Montmartre antique shops

founded when Montmartre was a village, the Cirque Médrano still survives, looking like nothing but the canvas tent of a travelling circus. The Cirque de Paris, the only bijou among all the Paris circuses, small and elegant and almost exclusive, sparkles successfully over in the Grenelle quarter, in the long metallic shadow of the Eiffel Tower. East of the boulevards, the Cirque d'Hiver plays nightly to a boisterous and appreciative audience, whose ancestors five generations ago carried the head of the governor of the Bastille through the streets on a pike. And the newest Paris variety hall, the Empire, is half a circus. Three and a half circuses for one town are pretty good.

The people of the circuses, like the travelling fairs, whose juvenile population of several thousand provides a tough problem to the Ministry of Education, lead their own curious, almost secretive lives. Within the town they are a separate town. They have no interests in the world outside. Their often large families, like the Fratellinis, are a world in themselves, and in the ring generation succeeds generation. When they die they are remembered like heroes. Foottit, the clown; even Little Tich, who was essentially a circus character — Little Tich who was a favourite model and companion to Toulouse-Lautrec, and shared the painter's gnawing neurasthenia — they are regretted and remembered in the world where public folly is the result of a secret science. In that world of queer things where the natural orders seem often to have been deliberately inverted, freaks

and giants, clowns and beasts, the elves and goblins of childhood's darkness made human, they who were born there retain all their lives the secret nostalgia of the tent and the ring, the sharp smell of sawdust and the roar of the crowd, the eternal thrill of the circus from Roman days till now.

The Third Musketeer

Some statues and some towns are never separated in my mind. I never hear a man speak of Tours but I see a dazzling white stone square, sun-dappled by the flat green leaves of plane trees and haunted by the great, brooding figure of Balzac. At the rippling name of Arles I think of a little swarming cloister immured by immemorial houses, gay with evening lights and laughter, and slender girls swaying coquettishly under the trees. There the Provençal poet Mistral stands in bronze, a hearty, genial, defiant man, more like a farmer than a poet and more like a warrior than either. I never think of Rouen without seeing in a simple dazzling picture the great gray cathedral and the statue of Joan. The only town in all Belgium, Belgium of Ghent and Bruges and the old Flemish cities, whose aspect is a constant portrait in my mind is Tournai, in the Walloon country, where in the shadow of an old cathedral rise Rodin's Burghers of Calais, an ironic, pitiful comment on war. I cannot remember a single statue in Marseilles or Lyons or Bordeaux or Orleans, and even the evocation of Paris, at first call, only urges me to recollection of the familiar equestrian figure of Henry IV on

A Paris Circus

the Pont Neuf and the massive Lion of Belfort. But now they are going to erect somewhere a statue to d'Artagnan, and that will fix one more town in a deficient and capricious memory.

If there is one book which might adequately survive the destruction by fire of all French history books and still give foreigners a true if picturesque conception of France in the seventeenth century, the France of the Great Louis, it is 'The Three Musketeers.' As Charles Reade's 'The Cloister and the Hearth' presents the most complete picture in the English language of the life of Europe in the Middle Ages, so the astounding classic of Dumas vividly reconstructs, with a sense of reality astonishing and convincing to the reader, the life and times of the valiant, impressionable Gascon.

D'Artagnan was less legendary than most great characters in fiction. His original, Charles de Batz-Castelmore, whose mother was an Artagnan, was born at Castelmore between 1610 and 1620. I have seen his birthplace — a little feudal stronghold, half farmhouse and half fortress. Gascony to this day is full of these ruins. A younger son and without inheritance, he left his father's house on a sorry nag one day with a letter for a gentleman at the court in Paris. Whether or not he fought another gentleman and soldier of fortune at the inn near Orleans is not certain. D'Artagnan's biographer, Sandraz de Courtils, says so in his memoirs, and the insouciant Dumas, who knew a good story when he saw it, did not

hesitate to reproduce it in 'The Three Musketeers'; nor is that the end of his borrowing from the industrious and helpful Courtils.

At any rate the young d'Artagnan reached Paris, served in the guards and later in the King's musketeers. In 1645, according to one report, he performed a delicate mission for Cardinal Mazarin. On another occasion he accompanied Louis XV to Saint-Jean de Luz, a resort since made famous by other sovereigns. The real musketeer was by this time married, and the King's own initials appear on his marriage papers. He lived with his wife, of whom history says little, on the quays of the Seine, near the rue du Bac, where the green buses now thunder over the bridge between the Opéra and Montparnasse. It was to the gallant captain of musketeers that Louis turned when he wished to arrest the great Fouquet (was it after him that the famous restaurant in the Champs-Élysées was named?). And we know that d'Artagnan treated his unfortunate guest gently until he had him safely confined during the King's pleasure in a fortress dungeon at Pignerol. Seven years later the musketeer made the same journey, but this time with the great Lauzun, guilty of having found favour in the eyes of the King's sister. The splendid house to which Mademoiselle came to see her lover, and to which she was rowed discreetly down the river at night in a royal barge, still stands on the Île Saint-Louis.

A musket ball killed the valiant Gascon in 1673, at the siege of Maastricht. He was then Governor of Lille, and at one time some stone of consequence

must have marked his grave. But millions of graves have succeeded his in the Low Countries since then, and if his memory had not been kept alive by the scholarly Courtils, who was a veritable Sam Johnson of his time, a gentlemanly hack writer peddling Lives and Memoirs, he would not have been snapped up by the lazy genius of Dumas. It was undoubtedly in the three-volume 'Memoires de M. d'Artagnan,' written by Courtils and published by Pierre Marteau, of Cologne, in 1700, that Dumas found the rich mine that furnished him with his Three Musketeers. It was undoubtedly Courtils who invented the amorous adventures of d'Artagnan, for the same powers of invention, indiscreetly employed upon personages still living, landed him on three different occasions in the Bastille, the cooler of that day. But either his imagination was inadequate or his destiny ungenerous. In another cell in the Bastille, while Courtils languished there, was a prisoner whose identity was but whispered, and whose face was never seen. The biographer of d'Artagnan never apparently heard of him, and it is an irony of literature that the man whose inventive powers provided Dumas with 'The Three Musketeers' should have been entirely ignorant of the Man in the Iron Mask!

Christmas in Paris

The unfamiliar sight of a tall, grave young man in a Paris street, with flat student's cap and long cherry-wood pipe, has reminded me this day of the dead sculptor Gaudier-Breszka, with whom I went to

school, and of the crowded Christmas réveillons of other years. The réveillon, alone of those nineteenth-century times and manners, has not changed. It is still the garish, tinselly, noisy, bacchic feast it always was. Of all the year's festivals it is not peculiar to any one city, as Mi-Carême is to Paris and to Nice. It is the same in a dead provincial town, celebrated boldly in the Café du Commerce, with the ceiling a maze of coloured ribbon and the steamy windows a patch of bewildering and pagan night on the dark Christmas silence of the city's unique square. It is the same in the heart of the remote countryside, in a Breton village or a lost hamlet in the pine forest of the Landes, where a fiddle and an accordion make music to wild dancing and the tall, black shadows move in a crazy saraband on the whitewashed walls. In Paris it is the one event which unites in gastronomic accord the workman in his attic and the rich man in his mansion. The midnight oysters, the black, succulent boudin, the turkey with its truffles and chestnut stuffing, the foie gras, the amber wine creaming in the thin glass, the warm, communicative, infectious air of carnival.

Going to a party at midnight has still for old-fashioned people the slightly solemn effect of going to midnight mass, and that is why the mass commonly precedes the réveillon. One emerges a little spectral from the dim interior of the Sacré Cœur or the Madeleine into the clear, cold, midnight air, in which lights are stirring and a vague noise murmurs as of fiddles

warming up. The restaurant is unfamiliar in its new guise. There is a hearty, boisterous air of unreality reflected even in the staid faces of the waiters. The earliest parties to arrive are a little nervous, like children on their birthday morning. The oldest of them, as the youngest, are a little shamefaced, like a Boy Scout caught doing a good deed. It needs the gradual crowding of the place, the genial encouragement of a multitude at the table, the first tentative throwing of ribbons and bursting of coloured balloons, to put the party thoroughly at its ease. These, and possibly the first bubbles of golden wine bursting in the frosted glass.

I spent last Christmas Eve in a Montmartre cabaret. The year before, I spent the night of réveillon in a Norman inn, before a vast Gothic chimney and a hearth on which a suckling pig browned satisfyingly. Bells from an eleventh-century church boomed outside with a note of cheerful omen, and inside the warm inn the host's radio produced out of thin air the absurd foxtrot music of a famous London band.

These, however, were exotic réveillons, unfaithful to the unchanging character of the true Parisian feast. For that you must go to Menilmontant or to Belleville, to La Villette or to Charenton. Out by the wine vaults at Bercy, where each marchand de vin puts down his cask of Saumur or Vouvray early in the year, to be drunk with the Christmas oysters, every little wineshop has its traditional réveillon,

and for days afterward the streets are littered with the coarse shell of the popular Portuguaise oyster. Issuing from such humble establishments you will hear all the night of Christmas Eve and well into Christmas Day a hard pounding as the unfamiliar dancers hit the unpolished floor. The music will rise, shrill and harsh, above the dull bourdon note of drumming feet. Now and again the night will be rent by the high, squealing laughter peculiar to the Paris midinettes, and more rarely perhaps the glass door will open suddenly, a flood of warmth and light and noise and protest will be let into the silent street, and suddenly a dark, indignant figure will be shot out into the darkness, to pick himself up in a half-angry, half-humorous confusion of vinous misery, and to inflict himself a little later upon another long-suffering party.

For Bohemia and its strange population, of course, Christmas, like the Fourteenth of July, is yet another of the year's plentiful feasts. For days before the day the four great caravanserais of the Quarter, at the crossroads of the Boulevard Raspail and Montparnasse, show a growing incandescence. Painters and models, writers and critics, interior decorators, jazz composers, playwrights, and poets, of all nationalities and races, abandon dull care and joyless work with one accord and prepare to have a good time. Japanese and Arab, Shintoist, Moslem, and Jew appear, in Montparnasse at least, to have no objection to celebrating the religious feast of the Christians.

In a quarter where all work is fitful and eccentric, and done rather away from Montparnasse than within it, where the nights are given over to interminable conversations in the smoke-filled cafés or under the tree-spangled moon, and the day is full of dreaming and desire, every holiday is seized as an escape from reality. The feasts of the French, therefore, and the pagan feasts of the Scandinavians, tremendous and bacchanalian, are celebrated with equal gusto with the saints' days of the Irish and the Independence Day of the Americans. On the seacoast of Bohemia every day is a holiday, and at midnight on Christmas Eve the coast wise population begins a frolic that lasts into the new year. And even the ghost of Modigliani, the wild and brilliant painter of Montparnasse, who died suddenly five years ago in the flower of his talent, may for these brief nights not haunt the scene of joy.

Crimes and Mysteries

Edgar Allan Poe, sleeping in his somewhat neglected grave in Baltimore, should have been living and in Paris at this hour. His sombre mathematical curiosity would have been aroused, his terror-haunted imagination would have been launched on another dark and awful adventure by the narratives of the strange and inexplicable crimes with which the French newspapers, for lack of more elevating news, at present abound. The murder of the Spanish Jesuit in his curious apartment in the rue de Varenne, often frequented by nocturnal and closely muffled

visitors; of the girl Gaby, dead and dismembered in an apache-ridden suburb; of the rich old woman at Le Cateau, found dead and alone in her gloomy mansion, but with her jewels and money and handsome furniture untouched, and the suicide, a day later, of the local innkeeper's wife, accused by local gossip of the old woman's murder — these violent incidents which remain mysteries to the French police might have been dramatically unveiled by Poe's amateur criminologist.

The murder of the Jesuit, I think, would have given his romantic mind a fascinating, a disturbing field for speculation. His rich imagination, tinctured by mediævalism, almost monastic in its austerity, would have taken fire at the intriguing atmosphere of the crime. With what a slow and stately music he would have accompanied the strange procession of observations and deductions! The return to France in secret of several members of a proscribed religious order, the death of one of them, apparently of a normal malady, but actually of poisoning. A mysterious apartment in the rue de Varenne, in an ancient quarter full of old mansions behind high walls and little narrow shops behind brown-painted fronts, a quarter that neither in character nor in population has changed much since Poe was young. Midnight visits from other members of the same order. The discovery of the murdered Spaniard. The concierge's ignorance, as great as that of all other concierges. The doubts and suspicions and headshakings of the neighbours, no wiser than the concierge. The heavy,

exasperated dumbfoundedness of the police, no wiser than all the others, or perhaps wiser than they would say. All, in fact, of the old thrilling and creepy background of one of those mysteries of a city that are a ten days' wonder and then forgotten, to be buried in the archives of the police and only kept alive by the magic of speculation and reminiscence in the long memories of criminologists.

The affair of the rich old woman at Le Cateau is strange enough, but not so tempting to the passionate student of crime, to the patient hunter after old and hidden violence, stealthy murders by steel and strangling and bullet, by vial and witchcraft. Avarice or vengeance, jealousy or greed — dismiss this crime and its motives to your Flauberts and Balzacs, the great persevering novelists of provincial morals, of local life. But to the Poes and De Quinceys, your precious alchemists and antiquaries, polishers of enamels and gems, delving for curious lore among the tombs and dark places — leave to them the queerer tale of the hidden Spaniard, the emissaries coming in the dark, and the hidden death discovered in the daylight.

Some day, perhaps, the Club of the Eleven, that interesting but secretive little society of ten men and one woman, which meets at dinner in Paris once a month to talk over the history of crime, will publish the whole dark story of the murder in the rue de Varenne in their own private archives. 'The Curious Affair of the Spanish Jesuit,' it may be entitled, or more prosaically and with that characteristic French

disdain of melodrama, 'The Assassination of the Rue de Varenne.' It should be bound in dark tooled leather and be accompanied by a few good plates, in the old-fashioned style, rather gloomy and depressing. The author of the little history would read it aloud at one of the solitary gastronomic occasions of the society, and be prettily commended by the solitary lady member, and rather gruffly praised by some of the gentlemen, with their mouths full of soufflé.

But ah, how Poe, with his very genius of intuition for all that was dark and wild in the soul of man, would have pondered and probed the mystery! It was this secret intuition that made him spiritually akin to Baudelaire, his disciple, and enabled the disciple to make a translation of the 'Tales of Mystery and Imagination' that has not been bettered by any Frenchman, although many have toiled at it since. It is this same fellowship with melancholy and with fear that drives, by a strange impulse, imaginative and unknown admirers of the French poet like shadows into Montparnasse Cemetery, there, in solitude, to weep at night over his unforgotten grave.

For there is among Frenchmen a curious coincidence between the poetical instinct and the study of crime. The chief criminal investigator in France, M. Faralicq, is a thin, scholarly man, with peering, near-sighted eyes, who writes verse in his moments of professional leisure, and even carried off the poetry prize at school. Kipling's Stalky, who would have coveted M. Faralicq's job with shining eyes, would

not have purchased it, I think, at the price of writing poetry. And even old Paul Beyle, stooping over his test tubes and bloodstains and fingerprints in his laboratory and crime museum high up in the Police Department building, fingering his gruesome relics of a century of murder, robbery, political assassination, is still at heart a diffident scholar murmuring lines from Racine and something soft and adolescent and nostalgic from Alfred de Musset.

Black Venus and White

Sixteen years have passed since the founder of Cubism shocked and delighted Paris by his declaration that a primitive Hottentot nude just brought from Africa was far lovelier than the Venus of Milo. Picasso's own robust art is no longer considered very astonishing, and therefore fashionable, but the vogue of the black Venus still persists. In its place in the museum of the Trocadéro it has its worshippers — Cocteau and Foujita and Zadkine, and, stranger still, and silenter, an occasional old man peering through spectacles and lost in rapture and bewilderment at the evidence of an ancient cult of beauty in the violent darkness of the African forest.

The fashion in art has swung in turn from the ancient to the modern and from the modern to the primitive, and the white Venus of the Louvre, the Venus whose pale limbs and mild, sad eye troubled an earlier generation of artists and critics, until lately had fallen upon an honourable obscurity. But now an unexpected incident threatens to disturb her

antique peace. An expedition has been fitted out by some merchants of Athens to search in the depths of the little harbour of the island of Milos for the arms missing from the statue. The effort probably will prove useless, for there is some evidence that the arms and other fragments broken from the figure are in the Louvre, lying forgotten among the fascinating litter of broken marbles and unidentified casts that accumulate in all museums. But the report of the expedition has sufficed to revive an old controversy concerning the discovery of the Venus and its ravishment from the island.

The various reports are in conflict concerning the measures taken for the preservation and the removal of the statue, but they are in accord as to its discovery. On a day in the spring of 1820 a peasant named Bottonia informed the French Vice-Consul on the island of Milos, Louis Brest, that he had discovered a stone figure of a rare beauty among the ruins that then encumbered the island. It was already night, but the vice-consul ordered torches to be brought, and ran eagerly to view the discovery. The Venus was found standing upright in a niche, completely sheltered from the elements, and intact. The left hand, uplifted, held an apple. The right upheld a fold in the robe of the goddess.

Thereafter precise details lack. A son of the vice-consul has left statements insisting that his father acquired the statue with the intention of offering it to the French Government. Other statements made

at the time, and since, suggest that the vice-consul shrank from this initiative, and left it to his hierarchical superior, the Marquis de Rivière, French Ambassador at Constantinople, to acquire the goddess if he thought fit. The ambassador seems to have lost no time. He instructed a secretary to the embassy, the Comte de Marcellus, who was returning to France in the schooner Estafette, to call at Milos and embark the statue. And this M. de Marcellus successfully did, but with some mishap to the Venus.

What happened between the discovery of the goddess in her protective niche, magnificently intact after over twenty centuries, and her final arrival on the deck of the French schooner, nobody will ever know. It is probable that even in those days, before the romantic Byronism of the period had reached this quiet island of the Cyclades, all unaware of its later glory, the finding of the Venus was not without its disquieting consequences for the life of the islanders. The vice-consul himself, more Greek than French, probably regretted its departure. A score of peasants were willing, perhaps, to prevent its ravishment by violence. And then upon the scene, already complicated and confused like the stage in a Greek tragedy, came the dark Arabian brig Galaxidion, with orders to remove the Venus in the interests of a Turkish or Albanian dragoman named Mouroussi.

The statue had already been removed from its niche. It was being dragged by ropes to the water's edge by a boat's crew of the Galaxidion when the

French schooner entered the harbour. The Comte de Marcellus, seeing his prize torn almost from his grasp, danced on the deck of his vessel with the mortification that is only known to collectors, and after them, perhaps, to diplomats; and he was both. And then the Gallic blood boiled over in his veins and he and his sailors took a hand in the game. He, too, landed a boat's crew.

The Frenchmen seized the ropes of the statue from the hands of the Galaxidion men; there followed an ardent struggle, in which Vice-Consul Brest appears to have joined and to have fought like a Trojan. Belaying pins and cutlasses were laid about valiantly, and the Venus received its share of the blows. When the figure was finally hauled in triumph on the decks of the Estafette it was sadly mutilated. The arms were missing. The nose, the chin, the lobes of the ears, the lower lip and the tip of the left breast were damaged. The goddess had suffered more from the passions of her admirers than from the storms and struggles, the changes and chances of two thousand years.

The mere fact of Moslem and Christian fighting over the possession of the statue of a pagan goddess, alien to both religions, is not without its irony. And the triumphant despoiler of the island temple, where the last and greatest relic of the beauty of the antique world had been hidden since the world upon which she reigned had fallen into ruin, was not slow to blame the violence of the infidel for the wounds that Venus, in that unequal battle, had received.

The Jewel at a City's Heart

The Jewel at a City's Heart

The Middle Ages, with their desperate attractiveness to men of our age of machines, have left nothing behind them but a snatch of song and a few stones. Nothing of the dark soul of those men in iron remains to tell their story but a score of round towers, rude and still formidable ramparts grass-grown as those at Chinon, a few black-letter manuscripts, the heaven-climbing Palace of the Popes at Avignon, the songs of François Villon, and the Romance of the Rose. These and a small island in the flowing tide of the Seine, now besieged by vandals.

To a visitor bewildered and enchanted by his first sight of Paris, ignorant even of the 'Notre Dame' of Victor Hugo, no experience is so rare and unforgettable as the discovery of the Island of Saint-Louis. It lies in the shadow of the great pile of Notre Dame like a neglected jewel. In contrast to its neighbouring island, the Île de la Cité — heavily freighted with the old palace of the law, the great gray buildings of the Prefecture of Police, and the noble cathedral itself — the Île Saint-Louis looks at first glance like a poor relation. It is in appearance at least of the Renaissance, whereas the Île de la Cité is in appearance mediæval. It is small and domestic, where the Île de la Cité is stately and grand. But how much more animated its quays, under their green trees, in the pearly light of spring. They are crowded with little shops, with the wine-bars and eating-houses even now frequented by the freshwater mariners of the port of Paris. But the ends of the island, the

boatlike prow and stern, still support remnants of the oldest domestic architecture left in Paris, surviving fire and flood, and the fury of men.

The early seventeenth-century Hôtel de Lauzun, at Number 17 on the Quai d'Anjou, is the most perfectly preserved private mansion in this city, in spite of the destructive habits of Théophile Gautier and his impecunious friends, and of Baudelaire and his hashish-eaters, who were among the old palace's temporary tenants. In the rue Saint-Louis en l'Île, which traverses the island from north to south, is an old jeu de paume roofed in small brown tiles, the predecessor of a modern squash rackets court. In the same street is the Hôtel Chénizot, once the residence of the archbishops of Paris. And at its end is the Hôtel Lambert, which once harboured Voltaire when he was conceiving the audacious plan of the 'Henriade,' and which for a generation has been the residence of the great Czartoryski family of Poland. The old houses on the Quai d'Orléans, on the southern side of the island, bear plentiful signs of the architecture of the reign of Louis XIV, and from one of them Princess Elizabeth Bibesco looks down the river through the windows of her historic apartment. The Quai de Bourbon — no other quarter of Paris conserves so many street names recalling the dethroned monarchy — also contains several mansions of the early seventeenth century.

The foundations of almost all these houses are older still, reaching back into the heroic times of the Middle Ages, whose solid fortifications can still be

Ile Saint-Louis and Hôtel Lauzun

traced through the sub-structure of all this part, the oldest, of Paris. Out of this rude and rocky basis the architecture of the Renaissance rose like a flower, all delicate traceries in stone, carved panelling, wrought ironwork. And between the brown-painted wooden fronts of the narrow cafés and low-ceilinged restaurants, sparkling in spring and slumbrous in summer with the animation or the content of life in this ancient quarter, the carved archways and flowering cornices of these old relics of the Renaissance touch the heart like a half-remembered fragment of verse.

But the peace of this rare island, garlanded in trees like a shrine, living its remote and insular life, even its humblest inhabitants hoarding its memories of past grandeur, is frequently threatened. The Commission of Ancient Monuments, so devout in its preservation of lesser beauties, has left the island as an historic unit practically unprotected from restorers and demolishers, and each year sees a new inroad into antiquity, such as the present widening of the rue des Deux Ponts, or a fresh experiment in modernization or reconstruction, such as those which are now changing the once harmonious roof-line of the isle.

A corner house at the intersection of the Quai d'Anjou and the rue des Deux Ponts, which Balzac made celebrated in 'César Birotteau,' has already been doomed and will shortly disappear. Other houses, not sufficiently remarkable in themselves to come under the immediate protection of the Com-

mission already mentioned, are being transformed into modern apartment houses, built as near the sky as the City of Paris will tolerate. The perspective of Notre Dame, already endangered by the vast stone statue of Sainte Geneviève on the new bridge near the island, is steadily threatened by the encroachment of tall buildings. The Île Saint-Louis, which grew up under the noble and protective shadow of the great apse of Notre Dame, and the feathery silver shaft of the Sainte Chapelle, is even menaced with the apparition of a skyscraper.

But this island, unlike Manhattan, can rediscover no beauty in height. Its soul is in the past, not in the future; on the earth, and not in the sky. Its glories are worn hollows in gray stone and mellowed traceries on arch and roof. It is a jewel worn too thin to be re-shaped, this jewel at a city's heart.

The Play in Paris

An American goes to the theatre to be amused, an Englishman preparing to be bored, and a Frenchman — what does he expect to see there, on the bright stage of painted cardboard and Patou frocks and modern furniture from the late Exposition des Arts Décoratifs, what but the synthetic expression of his own romance? A French play that does not centre in the inevitable temporariness of passion and the importance of change is certain to be merely a French adaptation of a play by a German, a Russian, an Austrian, a Jew, or a Negro. Not themselves sentimental, the French are terribly interested in the

sentiments of their neighbours. The problem of the wife abandoned by her husband, or (what is worse) by her lover, is to them a logical problem to be resolved as patiently, as scientifically and as logically as the only slightly more important problem of the husband jilted by his wife or by a ballet girl at the Opéra. That is why no play has the slightest chance of interesting the French unless it contains, to the exclusion of every other motive, a variation, new or old, on an old, a sempiternal theme.

On the banks of the old river which leaves the shores of this corrupt city, under leafy trees at Bellevue or Meudon where Rodin lived and half of the painting or dramatizing or poetasting youth of Paris fifty years ago took its girl friends on a Sunday, there are still extant little hotels with gardens and bosquets full of memories and caterpillars. Under the green arch that the old vines still make over heady youth sporting with Amaryllis in the shade I overheard the other day a family party dine loudly and laugh long. They were a family of the minor bourgeoisie, that backbone of France, efficient and independent, economical but fond of good living, thrifty, intelligent, and proud. When they marry their daughter they give a party that costs a year's income and the savings of ten years. Before the marriage they watch the prospective bridegroom with the cold suspicion and wariness that a small French family adopts toward a man not born within its sacred precincts. But the ink is hardly dry upon

the marriage deeds before the son-in-law is accepted with warm enthusiasm and is henceforth a pillar of the family fortress, closer to them than a son, because he has bought his birthright with good six per cent national defence bonds.

It was such a family, then, and its members sat down brightly and with a great deal of good-humoured family jesting around a large, steaming vessel of soup. When they had reached the large golden mountain of gudgeon and other small river fish called friture de la Seine, which was and is a specialty of the little riverside restaurants, a fish highly flavoured in recent years with the thin, opalescent film of oil which barges and motor boats leave on the river, the well of their humour had dried up, and desultorily, encouraged perhaps by the gathering darkness, they began to talk of serious things. A novel, the progress of aviation, a murder or two, the cost of living, the merits of an unknown sportsman, a light in his quarter, the financial situation and the trout-fishing and mountain walks (if you liked walking — it was so good for the figure) to be had in Auvergne. And then suddenly a young girl who was dining with the family, in a voice husky with shyness and emotion, asked during a brief lull if they had seen the plays of Henri Bataille. Ah, yes, they had. This, and this, and this. And then followed a discussion of the plays. The emotion, the agony of suspense, in 'La Danse de Minuit.' The passion, hoarse-voiced, throbbing and unfulfilled, in 'Après l'Amour.' I was waiting for that. Thereafter, in the dark, leafy bos-

quet, on which a hanging electric lamp threw a light sufficient only to attract the soft-winged creatures of the night, the sharp French voices, veiled in emotion and eloquent in surprise, filled the evening air with a shadowy picture of the stage on which a Frenchman, like Jacob with the seraphim, wrestles all night long with the vast, demoniac figure called Amour.

Along the boulevards east of the Opéra, in those old theatres of the Variétés and Saint Martin whose façades are dark and weather-stained as the old gate of the city itself, gigantic and incongruous, like a Roman remnant, they play nightly to tense and passion-stirred audiences the simple old comedies of love and betrayal and intrigue into which none of the witless poison of the small modern sex plays has crept. The vast, dirty theatre is still redolent of the sentimental, nocturnal, pleasure-loving Paris of the eighties. The corridors are full of an almost visible cloud of witnesses, the ghosts of dead things. The acrid, remembered odour of tobacco, of musk, patchouli, old fans, old lace, large hats, flowers, military uniforms, bocks on the boulevards and ices at the Café Napolitain, ancient fiacres, autumnal drives in the Bois, the riot of pleasure and the regrets of age, sweeps from the stage to the audience and from the audience to the stage. And in the power of that old, intercommunicable thrill little spinsters in shabby clothes and men who have lived all their lives in monotonous conjugal fidelity find their respectable, loyal hearts filled with terrible and

splendid passions as they watch from dark, forgotten seats in the balcony the torment and the desolation, the ecstasy and the death, of guilty love.

A French Wedding

Between the virgin sheet of a typewriter and the wall on which the wandering, hopeless gaze of all writers comes at last to rest, there is one small picture which time and again seizes this writer's attention. It is a drawing of a French wedding party in 1860. The figures are inked in boldly and look like silhouettes cut out of black paper. The décor alone of the curious Parisian salon is drawn in pencil — the candles with their glass shades; the stiff curtains, never to be pulled to; the square, upholstered stools.

It is the long, comfortable moment after the wedding déjeuner. A party of four are dancing a quadrille. A tall, angular young woman with a sharp nose and a receding chin, evidently the bride, is paired with her father-in-law, a little man stiff in an enormous collar, a large and encumbering white tie, a long old-fashioned frock coat falling to his ankles, and white waistcoat and gloves. The bridegroom is paired with the wife's mother. He is tall, bald, and foppish. His mustachios are arched and waxed. He has a glassy eye and a fine leg. He rolls the one and pirouettes with the other, to the evident admiration of his mother-in-law, small and buxom, with a lace bonnet and short breath. On the right of this curious and fascinating drawing two men sit at a small table

over a bottle. One stretches his legs in luxury, raises his glass, and orates. The other, with a face like a pig's snout, eager and comic, listens to him with open-mouthed astonishment. In the far corner of the picture a French poodle of the period looks disgustedly at a well-gnawed bone.

In three-quarters of a century the ritual has hardly changed. The salons de noces et de banquets of the old restaurants in Paris and the provinces still do a thriving commerce in wedding parties. There are many old fiddlers, in spite of the noxious invasion of young men with saxophones, who play at nothing but wedding parties between one Fourteenth of July and another. They suffer, it is true, from the unfair competition of the jazz bands. And there are fewer wedding guests, even among the old, who demand the leisurely and graceful dances once scraped with such communicative enthusiasm from a cracked fiddle.

When the Bois de Boulogne was fuller than now of little rustic restaurants, created in the romantic period early in the last century, bridal couples and their families drove out from Paris in a long and hilarious procession of coaches or fiacres. The civil ceremony was over at ten o'clock in the morning. That at the church was also over or had been dispensed with. At noon the celebrants arrived in the Bois, full of boisterous good humour. The long, elaborate wedding luncheon was served sometimes out of doors, in one of the vine-covered arbours peculiar in France to love and youth and the ardent

summer weather; sometimes within, in a long room with a dazzling oak floor and a dusty piano. The meal lasted for three hours, with intervals of dancing, and then ceased only to recommence. In the French countryside, to this day, it lasts for three days. The old people drowse in their chairs. The young dance day and night.

Speeches are not only not taboo but insisted upon. A Parisian wedding is full of long, incomprehensible speeches, not infrequently spiced with a little Gallic wit. In the country, where tongues are even slower than wits, a smart fellow of the loquacious sort, a very sea-lawyer among his dumb-witted kindred, is a valued guest at weddings. He may eat and drink his way through a province, so long as he can talk his way through it. And then woe betide a bride who does not laugh, even at the most pitiful of jests. A hysterical bride makes a good wife, according to country gossip. But the silent bride — ah, she is a creature of woe.

I saw one such once, at Saint-Cloud. In that hilly suburb of Paris, where the ruins of the burned Château of the Empress Eugénie have disappeared among the verdure and only the noble trees now indicate the once royal park, there is still a respectable commerce in wedding parties from Paris. This party was in progress in one of the little restaurants on the hill between the Bridge of Saint-Cloud and the park. It was an evening in spring, and through the open window and the undrawn curtain one could see

the bridal couple and the guests sitting flushed amid the ruins of the feast. A great deal of noise and good-humoured laughter filled the room. A little fat man with a very red face was making a speech to which none paid attention. A young man near the bride tried vainly to interrupt him, and laughed loudly at his own vain sallies. The bridegroom stared at the table, a trifle sulkily, as if he were annoyed at having so soon disappeared from the centre of the stage. And the bride herself, a figure caught in immobility, gazed at nothing with unseeing eyes, proud and, it seemed, inconsolable. The picture was not one to be forgotten.

The mechanics of a modern wedding are louder and faster. Glass-sided motor coaches have taken the place of the old fiacres and coaches ambling through the Bois, the red-faced drivers with wedding-favours tied to their long whips and knotted in their horses' tails, the cheerful guests exchanging charming badinage with passers-by. The jazz band playing American music to an unfamiliar French rhythm has replaced the fiddle and the 'cello. But the décor is unchanged — the cold room in the restaurant with its long white tables and its space cleared for dancing. The men, after the French fashion, clad in various styles of evening dress, although it is not yet noon. The women sparkling, but polite; frivolous, but correct, conducting themselves after that strange logic of the Frenchwoman, a mixture of gay impulses and brilliant common sense.

The Neglect of Rabelais

Rabelais, for all his cult, has never been a really popular author in France. The people never particularly care for the writer who translates into the language of the literate the rude, savorous speech of democracy. The quips and puns, the highly flavoured jests, the small coin of the language, chipped and worn by long usage in rough hands, have no place between the covers of a book. The folksongs of a country seem strangely thin and unfamiliar set down in cold print. The song heard of an evening in a country inn, when even on a summer evening the quickening wood flames are welcome on the hearth and the long-handled iron frying-pan sizzling over the fire makes grotesque shadows on the raftered ceiling, the songs sung in roughened country voices, a trifle melancholy at their gayest, have no part in printed texts.

They belong to the inmost life of a peasant race that for all the advance of urbanism never quite assimilates the easy, shallow thoughts and emotions of the town. Your true peasant likes his literature a little coloured. A sad romantic tale in the manner of the 1830's, in the manner of Wordsworth and the Lake poets, seems to him like the essence of book-lore. He prefers fiction to fact, and the refined, elegant language of the characters in fiction to the extravagant nonsense of Rabelais, in which he dimly recognizes, as his own earth-brown features in a cracked bedroom mirror, the homely speech and doubtful jests of his kin.

The town of Chinon, indeed, has honoured its

brilliant son. His birthplace has disappeared, but in the Street of the Lamprey stands still the crooked timbered house from an upper window of which Rabelais fished for lampreys in the troubled waters of the flooded Vienne. And on the green quays of the beautiful little town, under the shadow of the ruined castle that crowns the hill over the river, a bronze figure of the irreverent philosopher looks dreamily upon an indifferent populace, still and pensive, like an old scholar in his sleep. But apart from the local lodge of Freemasons, which defiantly fronts the church, and a street called after him, there is nothing to remember him by.

And in all France how little outward sign is there of the greatest writer of the Renaissance! Where a thousand mediocre poets and painters, statesmen and bankers of the Third Republic are remembered in street names and squares, cafés and restaurants, there are hardly half a dozen rues Rabelais in all France, and I cannot think of one Café Pantagruel or Restaurant Grangousier. Voltaire fared better at the hands of his countrymen, Racine generously, and Victor Hugo better still. It is possible that the French, for all their pride in his fame abroad, are slightly ashamed of Rabelais at home, as of an article manufactured exclusively for export.

And yet the man who wrote 'Run after a dog and you will never be bitten; drink before thirst and you will never be thirsty,' is still the profoundest interpreter of Gallic habits and Gallic humour. From the Pont Neuf in Paris to the Cannebière in Marseilles

you may hear the slow rumble of laughter at jests which Rabelais heard. The fable of Gargantua was no more a fable than the life of many a heroic peasant's son born under the dark rafters of a cottage in Touraine. Each country wedding feast, lasting three or four days and providing hospitality for nearly a hundred guests, repeats, incident for incident, the main features of the five books of Pantagruel. The life of the people, after three centuries or after thirty, revolves around the same theme. There are many stories, but there is only one plot.

In the quarters of Paris where habits have least changed, in the narrow streets south of Notre Dame, the dark alleys between the river and Verlaine's old café in the Boulevard Saint-Germain, there is still no sign of Rabelais. The old street lanterns still hang from their wrought-iron brackets in the wall, the blank, eyeless wall of the houses, of an age sordid with neglect, lean together over the dank, noisome alley. The place is ripe for murders, and nocturnal singing of drunkards, and quarrels with the watch. Mariners from the seagoing barges moored under the bridge and a late party of students out carousing pass with uneasy step. Many a little wineshop offers itself as a Rendezvous des Mariniers, or des Pêcheurs. There are in this quarter, as in the neighbourhood of every market-place in France, a multitude of curious café signs in which the simple humour of the people delights — Singing Magpies and Fishing Cats, Smoking Dogs and Golden Lions. There is here, as in every port of France and every port of every

European nation, at least one sign which calls attention to the sailor man's eternal curiosity regarding the black race, a relic of those early mariners who astonished Europe with stories of Africa. But in only one village in France, or anywhere, did I ever see an inn sign which came right out of the unrepentant heart of Rabelais. It was upon the road between Chinon and Saumur, a little hand-painted scrawl over a humble inn door, and read, 'L'Assurance Contre la Soif' — 'The Insurance Against Thirst.' Gargantua would have rubbed his incredible hands together at the sight of that.

The Kingdom of the Beggars

It is a curious story, this of the battle between the worthy bourgeois and the nighthawks in the rue Lagrange. Notwithstanding an indignant municipal counsellor's demand for police protection from the mendicants in rags and vermin who make the night hideous with their songs over wine — such songs and such wine! — in the terrible, little all-night cafés in that quarter, the nocturnal uproar continues. The outraged citizens, furious and sleepless, hurl in vain their old crockery upon the wire-protected glass roof of one café of the night-birds. That old recourse of the honest burgher, as old as history itself, for once has failed. The disinherited of the earth, sprawling in their rags and filth, the men and women without riches and without shelter, the nameless ones, are for once triumphant. After their day of shameless mendicancy on the hard sidewalks of Paris, of out-

stretched palm and whining voice at the doors of churches, of miserable indolence under bridges and dark portes-cochères, their night is their own. Their night is an orgy of oblivion, profitable to the shrewd café proprietors who exploit their desire for quick relief from the over-whelming and unescapable misery of their lives, and pleasant to themselves as the dark and incredible wine they drink from bottles, between the hoarse choruses of the gutter and the carrefour which they scream into the horrified, defenceless night.

This old quarter between Notre Dame and the Cluny Museum has echoed since the beginning to the rude tumult of such unseemly noises. For ten centuries, perhaps twenty, it has had its brief repose disturbed by such brawls as Villon heard and brawled in, staggering to some narrow bed in attic or alley, from a heady night in a cabaret full of other dark and dangerous men. In this secret labyrinth of narrow streets around the Place Maubert, the life of a man hard pressed by the watch, or come upon suddenly by his enemies, was the life of a candle-flame flicked out between thumb and finger. He saw the stars overhead in the narrow strip of sky between the high, overhanging gables, as the secretive and imperturbable witnesses of his doom. In that moment, he remembered perhaps a snatch of his own verse, or of another's. He saw the gallows, from which by an assassin's knife he was cynically to be delivered. He saw the green life of France, the immense and green forests, and the warm taverns. He heard the

sharp hoofbeat of horses upon a frosty day, and saw beasts steaming in an inn yard. He saw his own infancy, soft or violent, in palace or slum. And then the stars leaped together and faded out of the narrow sky, and the little life that was in him, that held him to this gay and violent city, full of taverns and palaces and churches, of monks and lawyers, poets and priests, oozed out in a thin dark stream. The nighthawk of mediæval Paris had soared his space, and fallen like an arrow from the dark heavens.

In a little street of this quarter Dante lived, and the street bears his name. His thin profile, like a worn bronze medallion, gleamed strangely amid these jesting vagabonds, portly monks, and greasy men of law. The Sainte Chapelle, then new and glistening in the uninterrupted Parisian sun, threw a long sharp shadow over the low-timbered houses and the green river. It seemed to the Italian, perhaps, like the sword of his own flaming Angel at the gates of Paradise. It seemed to Villon, a poet too, indifferently like the high spiked halberd of the King's men, and the pricking arrow of his own genius, spurring him to drink and despair.

Five centuries or so later another poet staggered in this quarter under the intolerable burden of his destiny. In the Café of the Turk, on the Boulevard Saint-Germain, the shaggy Verlaine sat day after day and night after night over the iridescent poison that consumed him — the pale Lelian, slave and martyr. The phantoms that peopled his despair, the spectres

which haunted him like apparitions of joy, were not less real than the shadowy figures that haunt the old quays of the Seine at night, that slink furtively along the narrow alleys that run down to the river, under the uneasy gaslight, past old and sordid houses without name.

For generations past a sinister legend has grown up around the Place Maubert, the 'Place Maub'' of popular song. That meeting-place of many curious streets, so dull and respectable by day, becomes at night the capital of a strange kingdom, the unholy and pathetic kingdom of the damned. The dreadful gaiety of the lost people fills it after dark. From behind the curtained windows of little drinking-bars a terrible sound like a cruel caricature of laughter wounds the night. The professional beggars, oblivious of their foul rags, the seeming-lame and the seeming-blind, dropping all pretence, chink glasses and count their gains. Towards the derelict men and women who have fallen, through sickness or poverty or indifference, into this company of the disinherited, and come shufflingly out of the darkness into this warm and fœtid air of comparative prosperity, the professionally poor show a disdainful and patronizing generosity. The true derelicts, warmed by the harsh but welcome wine, sleep with their heads bowed in their rags and humility, heedless of the dark chorus and the wild talk of the lost people. The jeers, the rude jests, the thick, rumbling rage of the vagabonds at the indignant protests of the awakened burghers fall upon their timid uncomprehending ears.

Strains of an old air familiar to the faubourgs, vague words and melodies from an old catch sung through centuries of vagabondage rise in the heated, smoke-filled room, misty with the vapours of wine and tobacco. An air with which some chansonnier of the nineties delighted fashionable Paris in the early brilliant days of the Chat Noir strikes the ear strangely in this foul and sordid place, the last refuge of misery. But the insolent denizens of the cafés around the Place Maub', and the outraged bourgeois, their unwilling neighbours, are alike unconscious of the irony. The songs of the beggars that Richepin wrote in his young ardour, that old Aristide Bruant sang in a hardy but sincere sentiment — these songs arouse the unbounded fury of the citizens when sung shrilly by the beggars themselves, lost in their alcoholic oblivion.

The Woman from Malabar

The dark beauty from Malabar of Baudelaire, sighing under the misty aureoles of the gas-jets of Paris, that Paris which the tourist guesses at but vaguely, undulating between the rue Poissonnière and the heights of Belleville, bistro after bistro and bouge after bouge — the dark beauty, sighing for the thin ghosts of swaying cocoanut palms on a magic isle, ah! she has me entranced. I walk abroad in Paris of nights and I see her yet. The winter mists have gone. The gas-jet is the great lustrous moon. The palms are the plane trees and the chestnuts on the Champs-Élysées. And the magic isle is the Île de la Cité, hung suspended

like a green Babylonian garden between the towers of Notre Dame and the statue of Henri Quatre, with the crazy Seine rushing madly by in her spring emotions, and the tugs tooting downstream with a flock of barges, and a new whitewashed Norman inn on the island, and, hard by, on the right, or respectable, side of the river, an authentic inn with the promising sign: 'I doctor all maladies of thirst and hunger.' And so she does, that fat wife of an innkeeper.

The night falls in Malabar like a scarlet mantle and in Paris like a cloth of gold. So have the sky signs crept up the dark, green-leafed curtain of the Champs-Élysées, setting out in yellow letters against the Nubian night the virtues of the 'Figaro,' of the Soap Cadum, of the Hôtel Claridge, and of the other commodities you know already. Over the river the Eiffel Tower, with its electric advertisements of M. Citroën, rises like an Egyptian hieroglyph, a toppling totem-pole of toy cars. And down the broad purple avenue between the lighted grave of the Unknown Soldier and the nymphs and dolphins plashing in the fountains of the Place de la Concorde moan the sirens of the long, dazzling cars, laden with beauty, honk the hoarse klaxons of the red taxis, roar by in their silver chariots the sleek-haired young men charlestoning madly on their accelerators, slink sadly the dark Italians, enamoured of a little Northern beauty.

But the beauty from Malabar, under the scarlet night? I have come upon her in omnibuses, in the subway, in the Galeries Lafayette, in the Ritz bar, in the Musée Grevin, among the wax murderesses, in a

motion picture of Ivan the Terrible, in Zelli's drinking menthe verte and the Chinese Umbrella drinking tea. I have seen her everywhere since last night, when I heard a woman with a harp sing the lines of Baudelaire, in old Montmartre, under a silent moon.

Somebody has just discovered in the narrow rue Volta, near the ancient Jew's quarter of the Temple, what is probably the oldest house in Paris. It is a high, five-floored building in half-timber with dormers in the roof, and the impressive date of 1240 over the door. For centuries it has been a lodging-house of the poorer sort and the rooms now are very much as they were when it was built to lodge the families dependent upon the protection of the Priory of Saint Martin of the Fields, near the Abbey of the Templars. Curiously enough, this almost perfect relic of the Paris that Dante and Villon knew — they may have walked in the very street and slept in the very house — is unknown to the guide-books and has until now remained ignored except of a few lovers of antiquity. If the house had been in Rouen or Caen or Lisieux, instead of in Paris, people would have made pilgrimages to look upon the last of the humbler life of the thirteenth century.

And this unexpectedness, this casualness which is, however, not merely sophistication, is part of the vitality and seduction of Paris. No other city has it in this degree, although no ancient city is without it. People carry the dead life of a town — as they carry its dust, its colours and odours — in their blood.

They are of one flesh with it, and in France, particularly, no citizen of one city or peasant of one region is ever happy away from his own place. The French peasant, even of a village five miles outside the walls of Paris, has a real fear of the towns, a fear that is not unmixed with hatred. To him the inhabitants of the next village are étrangers — foreigners — and the fact is to him sublimely indifferent, that other foreigners exist of a separate and distinct nationality, race, colour and religion. His own countrymen cease to be compatriots outside the confines of his own pays, the horizon of his own multi-coloured fields and the stone or iron Calvary at the cross-roads, and the one apprehensive and contemptuous word étranger sums up for him all who are without this severely frontiered pale.

Thus it is that for all ordinary purposes of psychology Bismarck's famous definition remains brilliantly exact — a Frenchman is a gentleman who wears a decoration and is ignorant of geography. In a tiny Norman hamlet I know, only two hours from Paris and looking down on that great natural channel of civilizing influences, the Seine, not one of the women and few of the men have ever seen Paris, and many of the elders have never even visited a town twenty miles away. The miners in the Kentucky hills are not more remote from the hubbub of the metropolis and the changing life of the world.

The Art of Cabaret

I have been drinking a wine dear to James Joyce and found only in two restaurants in Paris — a dry,

hard wine, light golden, with a hint of green in it, like pale February sunlight. It is called Muscadet, and it has nothing at all to do with the sweet dessert wine of Muscat, for it grows on the stony soil of Brittany, a wine from the outcrop of stone calvaries, the wine of the Holy Grail. Sitting over this curious drink, and feeling my mind grow gradually into a hard brilliance full of green lights like opals, I find myself going over and over in reflection the queer stories I have read and heard in the last few hours.

First, Guy de Maupassant's tale of the Fisherman in the Seine and his fat wife, Mélie, who found one day his well-baited and familiar fishing hole swiped by a newcomer, a parvenu among fishermen, and, when the parvenu's fishing grew too intolerably successful, up and hit him, so that he fell into the fishing hole and lay drowned under ten feet of green water. 'And the witnesses testifying that such were the facts, the prisoner was acquitted.'

And then another fisherman, a Russian, now fishing in queer waters. A few years ago Vasharoff (or some such name) was an amateur of painting and music and gastronomy, but chiefly of gastronomy, and, in short, a fairly successful Parisian. At the age of forty-five he was fatter than most men and balder than most men, but brighter and livelier than almost anybody of his age. And his doctor one day gave him exactly three days more to live if he persisted in drinking wine. He had that kind of liver. On the third day he reappeared before his doctor in a joyous

mood and announced that he had abandoned wine, but was drinking liqueurs. He had, at that very moment, more liqueurs in him than the Benedictine monks could make in a month. The doctor, strictly professional, gave him three months to live. At the end of the three months Vasharoff disappeared and was given up for dead.

Years later a wandering man found him in Italy, sitting almost naked in the sun on the beach of a fishing village, surrounded by nets and cobles. His bald head had grown a thatch of hair. His rubicund, fleshy body had grown lean and muscular. He had grown a long beard. And there he was, the incredibly dying man, the Vasharoff who had been buried by the doctors and forgotten by his friends, living like a primitive on his sun-scorched beach and shouting the willing fish into his nets. And, gastronome to the last inch, cooking his own food.

The end of the story is almost anticlimax. He was once a Tsarist and he is now a Fascist. And being quite a prominent Fascist, he changed his primitive fishing coble for a motor boat, and now he owns a whole fleet of motor boats.

One Russian brings me to another. He was a young man and a prince before the war. Now, if he is alive, he is driving a taxicab in Paris or throwing swords from his teeth into the floor of a Montmartre cabaret. In 1910 or thereabouts he fell off a steam yacht in Monaco harbour, and with his secretary and with all the pride and sangfroid of his twenty-one years he took up his abode in Monte Carlo. Those

were the days when Monte Carlo was Monte Carlo, and not a mere suburb of Deauville or Cannes, as Brooklyn is of New York and Amsterdam of Paris.

The prince began to distinguish himself. One night he drank his champagne firmly from the frail gold slipper of his dancing partner. On another he gave the manager of the Carlton Restaurant two thousand francs (when francs were francs) to clear the place for a private supper party. The party took place in the wine cellars and lasted until ten o'clock the following morning. When it finished the floor of the cellar was six inches deep in champagne and the 'cello player of the orchestra had long since departed in alarm, swearing that he would not have his 'cello drowned in wine for twice the money. And when the guests of that unusual party floated upward into the blue and gold Mediterranean sunlight their shoes were full of wine and their feet left wet traces on the sidewalk all the way home to their hotels.

And that brings me to the art of cabaret. The finest cabaret show I ever saw was given some months ago in a dusty ballroom, a vague Second-Empirish affair full of decaying antiquities and ancient bicycles, in the garden of a Normandy hotel. The shadow of a ruined castle, built for the grandson of the Conqueror to receive his death wound in, hung magnificently over the place, and in all the nooks and crannies of that old half-timbered inn there was an odour of dust and apple brandy, Calvados and the con-

quering worm. But a little girl from old New York changed all that.

The daughter of two generations of Tammany came into the antique abode like a wind from the outer Hebrides. Between the wine and the coffee, entre poire et fromage, she seized an ancient bicycle and rode it madly round the ballroom with feet and pedals flying in the wind and the dust rising in clouds from the yellow-draped, long-untrodden stage. From the little red-faced Frenchman bearing brandy in a long-necked bottle she took tray and glasses, placed them on the floor and whirled him round them in a Scottish reel until they both fell in exhaustion. The tall, melancholy proprietor, with a false eye and a false geniality, unable to damp our spirits in any subtler way, wound up an impossibly large and depressing horned phonograph, of the age and manner of the Eiffel Tower, but the hell-raiser from Tammany refused to be daunted by that. The archaic, wheezy tones of the unmusical machine proved a queerly appropriate accompaniment to the dancing and the bicycle-racing and the broken Norman chairs and the brandy in the long-necked bottle and the rain beating in through a broken window. The little fat Frenchman, with his fatter wife, rolled and shook and laughed in a fine frenzy. A tall American painter arched his eyebrows and preened himself and punned deliciously.

And the little girl from Broadway, incongruously out of the period and out of the picture in everything but spirit, forgot the shadow of the looming white

castle lost in the mist and rain in the chalk hill, and, kicking up the dust on the old floor of that deserted ballroom, danced with lighter feet than the feet of young women long since lying in the Norman churchyard, as if all the world were but an extension of Broadway, and Texas Guinan's were round the corner between the castle gateway and the inn.

And that I suppose is the art of cabaret.

The Ship of Fools

A very curious picture has just left the Louvre and the gallant company of the Venus de Milo and Da Vinci's laughing lady. It has gone for three years to the Ryjk Museum at Amsterdam, that Museum which is like a temple to the great Dutch dead, a Pantheon of the gods who lived when Rembrandt lived, who breathed the hearty Netherlandish air, who drank Spanish wine in great crystal goblets, who were high complexioned and high hearted, magnificent, fleshly, doubleted men; stamping and swearing and swinking and swashbuckling all through their epic lives. There in those great halls full of the robust presence of the Low Country burghers, pike and staff and scroll and scrip, under the shadow of a thousand men more alive than the living Dutch, in the still echoing stone passages where the walls are peopled like an entombed city, where the tramp of armed men, halberd and bodkin, trumpeter, foot, and horse sounds still to straining ears, the fantasy of a fifteenth-century Dutchman will be hung again among its peers.

'The Ship of Fools' is a painted ship, but upon no painted ocean. The drunken painter saw it as men drunken with folly or their own youth or the crazy colours of the bright visible world see toppling towers and the high heavens falling. There is water there, a headland and a glassy, motionless bay. But between the water and the sky no sail is set, no sharp prow parts the sea. The ship is landlocked, high and dry. The mast grows leaves and branches like a living tree. A clown's pink, eyeless mask grins from the branches, and a long, snake-like pennant flutters wide. A tonsured monk, a singing nun, a barrel with the spigot flowing free, and over the high prow a jester, capped and belled — they heard not the song the sirens sang, so filled were their ears with another song ——

> 'We are those fools who could not rest
> In the dull earth we left behind,
> But burned with passion for the West
> And drank strange frenzy from its wind.'

My mind will go back to that strange picture of old Jerome Bosch on days when the wind is in the west and my heart is in my mouth. From the little, crooked streets on the quayside opposite Notre Dame the hunched, narrow, overweening houses, high-fronted and peering, whispering secrets one to another over the tunnelled passageway, secrets that Victor Hugo knew, that Balzac guessed, I shall travel with that picture across the Low Countries to the ancient city by the narrow sea. There high houses lean together over the crawling waterways,

over the brick-paved streets. The life of the old city, secret and industrious, furtive, slow, and mysterious, like its own diamond dealers, flows from cellar to cellar, canal by canal, guild to guild. The fools have gone. The seas have swallowed them in their tall, black ships. The ancient burghers have faded, the colour and the pride have run out of them until they are gray and drab, bank tellers and deskmen all.

Somewhere in Batavia, in Java, on the Ivory Coast, by a swamp full of teak and ivory and headhunters and poison flying on winged shafts, there is an old man sitting very stiff and straight in a high-backed chair, with his back to the mosquito-ringed lamp, a man out of history, out of fiction, out of Conrad and out of mind. He was a Dutchman once, before Rembrandt died and adventure dwindled. He, too, heard and stopped his ears not all his life to hear the song the sirens sing. Old Jerome, seeing his youthful eyes with his old painter's vision, sharp and mystical like a monk, distorted and beautiful like Amsterdam architecture, embarked him on his adventure-haunted ship. The ship sailed away, in the middle of a green forest, full of trees like masts and masks without faces. The timbers have rotted since, but the voyage is not yet done. It awaits us still, before disillusionment rises and drowns us like a sea.

From the windows of a high studio behind the Gare d'Orsay, littered with brushes, bottles, cabin trunks, copies of Goyas, old Spanish frames, bright rugs from Tunis, and dark, purple wine flasks from

Algiers, I looked over the river and saw the bushy tops of the trees in the Tuileries Gardens tossing like a green sea. There, too, might the Ship be hidden, awaiting disenchantment. There might the crazy crew sicken with hope deferred, praying for the river to rise and the Seine to float them away. But the Tuileries were full of nursemaids, and children with hoops and hounds, and Senators loitering in the sun. And the tall lighted candles set out in the gallery before the altar of the adventurers were but the tall candles of the chestnut trees, lit like a street bazaar in Beirut, a candy stall in Cairo, and a broker's in Brooklyn.

But in the wind over the green trees came suddenly a shouting, a noise like ghostly singing in the shrouds, a sound like trumpets and banners and an army marching, like the armies of Napoleon and the crashing down of the gates of the Bastille. Over in front of the great gray Hôtel de Ville a crowd had broken through barriers and surged like a wall of water against a place where a slender figure stood. It roared and swayed and wept and laughed, filled with the terrible emotion that music arouses in men marching, and singing by the sea. It shouted and pressed nearer, as men do when the gods walk abroad. It shouted and ran and looked with burning eyes and hot throats as another crowd three nights before had done, tense under the white lights on the landing-ground, when a gray ship drifted like a leaf from the dark sky and alighted and the greatest adventure ended since Icarus soared and fell headlong into the sea.

O6-DLH-616